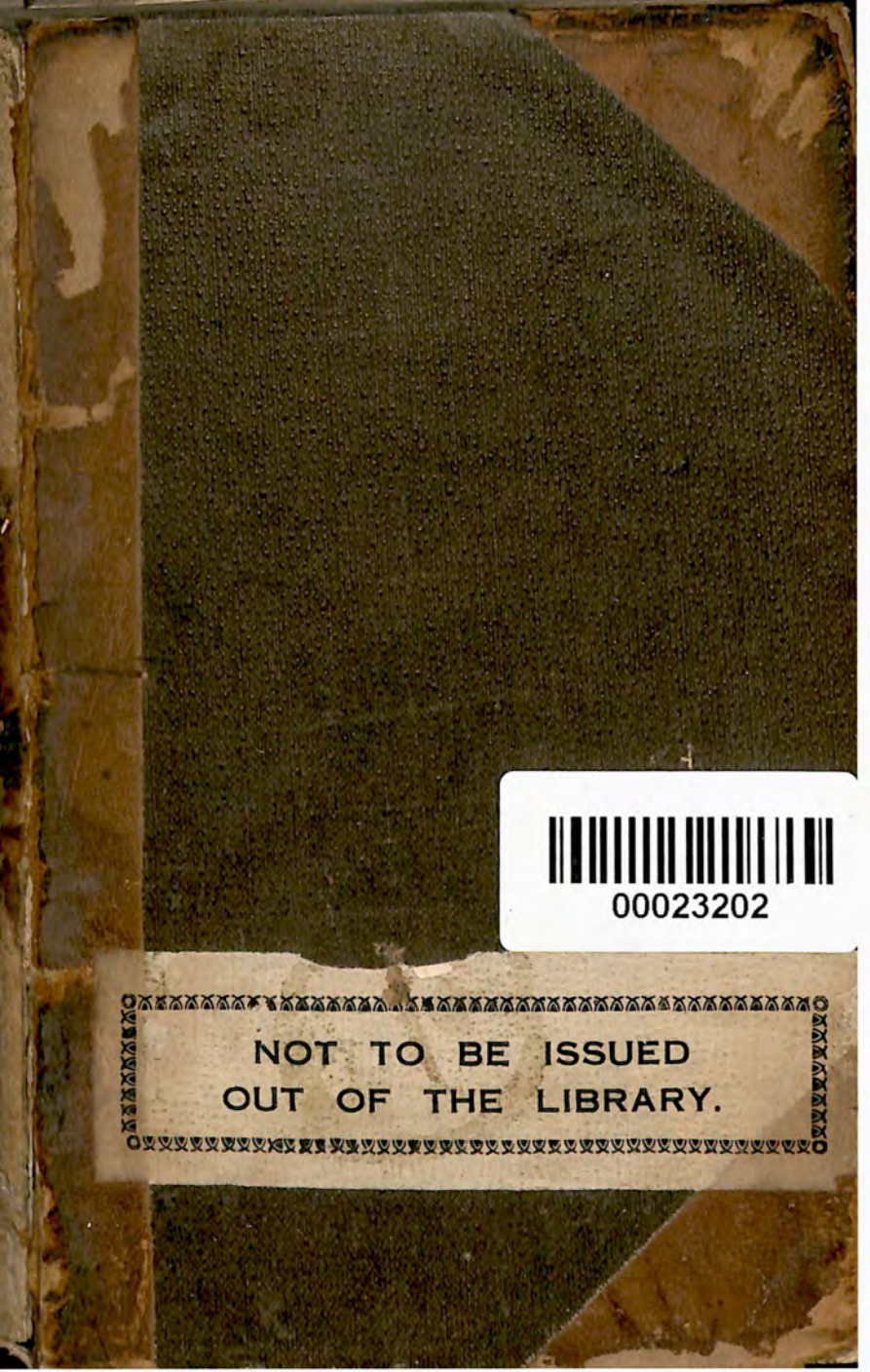
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MEMOIR AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MRS. GRANT OF LAGGAN.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
Printed by A. SPOTTISWOODE,
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MEMOIR AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MRS. GRANT OF LAGGAN,

AUTHOR OF

"LETTERS FROM THE MOUNTAINS," "MEMOIRS OF AN AMERICAN LADY," ETC.

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ac

EDITED BY HER SON,

J. P. GRANT, ESQ.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE THIRD VOLUME.

LETTERS.

1822.

LETTER		PAGE
255.	To Mrs. Gorman, July 9. Marriage of Miss Gorman. Advantages of the clerical profession. Remarks on Sir Walter Scott's "Nigel" - -	1
256.	To Mrs. Colonel White, Aug. Condolence on the death of a friend. A Compendium of the Old Testament best suited for the young -	3
257.	To Mrs. Wills, Oct. 30. Illness of her daughter Isabella. Miss Mercer. Dr. Rogerson. Henry Mackenzie. General satisfaction on the promotion of his sons - - - -	5

1823.

258.	To Mrs. Smith, Jan. 1. Reflections on the New Year. Her daughter Isabella recovering -	7
259.	To Mrs. Colonel White, Jan. A literary party. Writings of Adolphus and Simond. Lockhart's Spanish Ballads - - -	9
260.	To Mrs. Smith, Feb. 10. Dr. Chalmers' removal from Glasgow to St. Andrews. His scheme for regenerating the poor. Mr. James Smith -	11

LETTER PAGE

261. To Mrs. Brown, Feb. 13. Dr. Chalmers. Henry Mackenzie: his life of Home. The "English Opium Eater" - - - - - 13

262. To Mrs. Smith, March 16. Engaged in a translation of Gaelic Poetry - - - - 15

263. To Mrs. Hook, April 13. Remarks on Edinburgh society. The present low prices. Her daughter Isabella apparently better - - - 17

264. To Mrs. Colonel White, May 15. Thanks for a present of wine. Scott's Life of Swift - 20

265. To Mrs. Wills, May 15. Condolence on recent affliction. Scott's Lives of the British Novelists. Justice done by him to Johnson - - 22

266. To Mrs. Smith, May 16. Visit from an intelligent Traveller. Political state of France. "Miss M. Jones." Account of a singular present received from her - - - - - 24

267. To Mrs. Hook, July 16. Death of Mrs. Grant's daughter Isabella - - - - 28

268. To Mrs. Smith, July 21. The same subject - 30

269. To Mrs. Wills, Sept. 2. On the death of friends. Divine inflictions to be received as mercies. Cowper the poet. Mrs. Unwin's attention to him. Lady Hesketh. Miss Fanshawe. Hayley's Memoirs of his own Life - - - - 32

270. To Mrs. Hook, Dec. 12. Caution against indolence. Fine pictures in English country houses. Horace Walpole's Memoirs - - 36

271. To Mrs. Smith, Dec. 20. Has commenced a memoir of her own life. Bishop Heber: his Life of Jeremy Taylor - - - - - 39

1824.

272. To the same, Feb. 6. Her present inmates. Duncan's Travels in America. Life of John Home, by Henry Mackenzie. Memoirs of Lady Grizel Baillie. Remarks on "St. Ronan's Well" - 40

LETTER PAGE

273. To Mrs. Hook, Feb. 20. Has had another fall. Disapproves of widows marrying. New novels—"Pen Owen" and Percy Mallory" - - 43

274. To Principal Baird, Feb. 25. Sends him, at his request, a contribution to a new version of the Scottish Psalmody - - - 47

275. To Mrs. Smith, April 15. Cowper's "Private Correspondence." Pleased to see Cowper in *deshabille*. The Islay Campbells - - 49

276. To Mrs. Gorman, April 15. Condolence on the death of Mr. Gorman. Retrospect of her own feelings when similarly bereaved - - 51

277. To Mrs. Brown, May 13. Introduces Dr. Leo, a German clergyman - - - 54

278. To Mrs. Hook, June 28. New Novels—"Marriage," "The Inheritance," and "Redgauntlet." Captain Hall's Travels in America. Death of Lord Byron. Theodore Hook - - 56

279. To Mrs. Smith, June 28. Proposed visit to Mrs. Smith. Death of two old friends. Sale of Melrose Hall to the Marquis of Stafford. Lady Frances Erskine. Earl of Marr. Restoration of titles to Scottish Peers - - - 59

280. To the same, Aug. 8. Journey from Greenock to the Fairlie in Ayrshire - - - 62

281. To Dr. Francis Boott, Aug. 19. Description of the Fairlie. Hardyknute's Castle. Directions for seeing Highland scenery - - 64

282. To Mrs. Smith, Sept. 7. Miss Bannerman. Dr. and Mrs. Boott's tour in the Highlands - 67

283. To Mrs. Hook, Nov. 22. The late fire in the Old Town of Edinburgh - - - 69

284. To Mrs. Brown, Dec. 17. Retrospect of a tour to Caithness. Its peculiar scenery - - 72

285. To the Rev. Dr. Hook, Dec. 23. Congratulation on Mrs. Hook's restoration to health. Hardyknute. Laments the ruined grandeur of the Old Town of Edinburgh - - - 75

LETTER PAGE.

286. To Mrs. Smith, Dec. 26. La Fayette and the Americans. Anecdote of Bishop Leighton. Mrs. S——; recent change in her religious sentiments . 77

1825.

287. To Mrs. Hook, Feb. 23. Dangerous illness of Mrs. Grant's daughter Mary - - - 80

288. To Mrs. Gorman, March 22. The same subject. Sits for her portrait to Bewick. Maturin, the poet, and Lady Morgan. Their characteristic portraits. Sir James and Lady Mackintosh - 82

289. To Mrs. Hook, May 7. Has taken her daughter to the country. Description of Auchendinny and its scenery - - - - 84

290. To Mrs. Smith, Aug. 28. Tour to the Highlands. The Marquis and Marchioness of Huntly. Admirable character of the latter - - 86

291. To Miss Anne Dunbar, Oct. 2. Tour to the Highlands, continued. Laggan. Visit to Kinrara. The Duke and Duchess of Bedford. The Lady Montagus - - - - - 88

292. To Mrs. Smith, Dec. 16. Henry Mackenzie, the Man of Feeling. He reads an Essay on Dreams at the Royal Society - - - 91

1826.

293. To Mrs. Grant of Duthil, Feb. 2. Her late visit to Strathspey. Castle Grant. Kinchurdie. Insolvency of Constable, the Edinburgh bookseller. Sir Walter Scott involved in this misfortune - 93

294. To Mrs. Hook, Feb. 13. Indisposed since her return to Edinburgh. Remarks on "Tremaine." Richardson's "Clarissa." Her respect for Johnson and Burke. Has got a legacy - - 97

295. To Mrs. Wills, Feb. 28. Pecuniary misfortunes of Sir Walter Scott. His magnanimity under them - - - - - 100

LETTER PAGE

296. To Miss Mercer, June 22. Has removed to Brae House. Description of her new residence: its garden, birds, and flowers - - - 104
297. To Mrs. Frederick Grant, July 8. Accepts an invitation to Mount Cyrus. Reflections on the death of an infant child - - - 106
298. To Mrs. Fletcher, Dec. 14. Visit to Miss Trotter at Blackford House. Agreeable society there. Advantages of female celibacy. Disapproves of male celibacy - - - - 107

1827.

299. To a Friend in America, Jan. 16. Pleased with her new residence. Lord and Lady Byron. Modern English nobility: Sir Walter Scott: his conduct in adversity - - - 109
300. To Mrs. Hook, May 26. Introduces Miss D——, an American friend. Her garden and flowers. Mrs. Hemans. Miss Landon. "Rome in the Nineteenth Century." Miss Waldie - - 112
301. To the same, Sept. 12. Meeting with Dr. Chalmers. Visit to Mrs. Smith - - - 115
302. To Mrs. Fletcher, Oct. 27. Has returned from a pleasant visit to the west of Scotland. Her son's tour in Ireland - - - - 118

1828.

303. To Mrs. Smith, Jan. 1. After the death of Mrs. Grant's daughter Mary - - - 119
304. To the Rev. Dr. Dewar, Jan. 22. Thanks for a volume of Sermons. Her late daughter - 121
305. To Mrs. Hook, Feb. 6. Condolence on the death of Dr. Hook - - - - 123
306. To Mrs. Wills, March 12. Her late daughter Mary. Death of Lady John Campbell and of Mrs. Frederick Grant - - - 126

LETTER PAGE

307. To Miss Grant of Kincorth, March 13. Condolence on the death of Mrs. Frederick Grant - 129
308. To Mrs. Smith, April 22. Recent deaths. Meets Mrs. Henry Erskine. The Miss Stevens. Miss Fulford - - - - 132
309. To the same, June 4. The Rev. Edward Irving. Hears him preach in Edinburgh. Various presents lately sent to her. Mrs. Huntington's Memoirs - - - - - 134
310. To Mrs. Smith, July 18. Miss Douglas of New York. Visit to Sir Robert Liston and Mr. Henry Mackenzie - - - - 137
311. To Mrs. Hook, Aug. 1. Pleased with Mrs. Huntington's Memoirs - - - 139
312. To a Friend in America, Sept. 12. Visits to friends near Edinburgh. Her late daughter Mary - 142
313. To Miss Mercer, Sept. 24. Visits to friends near Edinburgh. Mr. J. S. More. Miss Trotter of Mortonhall - - - - 143

1829.

314. To Mrs. Hook, Feb. 2. Attachment of her former pupils. Their kind attentions. Memoirs of Lord Collingwood and Sir Thomas Munro. Professor and Mrs. Norton of America. Their visit to Edinburgh - - - - 146
315. To the same, April 21. Congratulations on Mr. Walter Hook's Marriage. Remarks on marriage. The husband should exert his superiority at the outset - - - - 149
316. To Mrs. Smith, July 14. Captain Hall's Travels in America. Memoir of Isabella Campbell - 151
317. To a Friend in America, July 16. Travellers in America, and their writings - - - 153
318. To Mrs. Hook, Aug. 26. Lady Charlotte Bury and Miss Blanche Bury. Receives a visit from Mrs. Hemans. Visit to Mrs. Smith - - 155

LETTER PAGE

319. To Mrs. Francis Boott, Oct. 28. Mrs. Smith of Jordanhill. Her character - - - 157

320. To Mrs. Hook, Dec. 5. Indolence of old age. The exercise of the kindly affections prolongs life. Memoir of Dr. Hook. The late Bishop of Winchester - - - - 159

1830.

321. To Mrs. Smith, Feb. 17. Death of Miss Bannerman. "Natural History of Enthusiasm." Death of General Stewart of Garth - - 162

322. To Mrs. Hook, March 1. Mr. Forster's work on Mahometanism. Heber's Travels in India. Mathison's Travels in South America - - 164

323. To Miss Mercer, March 17. Recent deaths among friends. Marriage of Miss Fletcher. Introduces Miss Douglas of New York - - 166

324. To Mrs. Hook, March 29. Condolence on the death of Sir Robert Farquhar - - - 169

325. To Mrs. Smith, May 22. Degeneracy of the French in politeness. The General Assembly and the Row Heresy. Parting with an old friend - 171

326. To Mrs. Hook, June 14. Sketch of a day at Brae House. Life of Sir Thomas Munro. His manly simplicity and interesting account of India - 172

327. To Mrs. Smith, Aug. 19. Makes a ludicrous mistake at a flower-show - - - - 176

328. To the same, Oct. 29. Memoirs of Madame Genlis. Dr. Jebb, Bishop of Limerick. Receives a book from him. The late Lord Blantyre. Mr. James Smith's speech on his death - - 179

329. To the same, Nov. 13. Has received an anonymous letter. The Bourbon family at Holyrood. Mrs. Carter's Letters. Remarks on her character - 181

330. To the same, Nov. 17. Sir Walter Scott on Demonology. A witch burnt at Inverness. The second sight - - - - 186

LETTER PAGE
331. To Mrs. Hook, Nov. 27. Reflections on old age. The Bourbon family at Holyrood. Sends a present of game to the Duchess of Angoulême - 188
332. To the same, Dec. 17. The Duke of Wellington and the Reform Bill. Life of Bishop Sandford - 192

1831.

333. To Mrs. Smith, Jan. 1. Reflections on the New Year - - - - 195
334. To the same, Jan. 26. Retrospect of her own life 196
335. To Dr. Francis Boott, Feb. 21. The Rev. James Gray. His success in India - - 197
336. To Mrs. Izett, March 4. Death of Mr. Robert Miller, bookseller - - - 200
337. To Mrs. Brown, April 12. Invitation to visit her in Edinburgh - - - - - 201
338. To Mrs. Hook, May 5. The late dissolution of Parliament. Sir Charles Forbes. Description of Brae House. Moore's Life of Byron - 202
339. To Miss Mercer, Oct. 31. Visit to Blawlowan. The Row Heresy - - - - 205
340. To Mrs. Brown, Dec. 3. Dr. Keith's work on the Prophecies. Her own spiritual condition. Has had another dangerous fall - - 208
341. To Mrs. Brown, Dec. 18. Letter addressed to a dying old friend - 211

1832.

342. To Mrs. Hook, Jan. 26. Mr. Jeffrey. His former and present politics. His amiable character in private life. The Bishop of Limerick and Mr. Forster - - - - - 213
343. To Mrs. Smith, Feb. 23. Miss Gibson. Reflections on the cholera morbus - - - 215

LETTER PAGE
344. To Mrs. Smith, March 12. Mr. John Maccall. His declining health. The "Natural History of Enthusiasm." Life of Bishop Heber - - - 217
345. To Mrs. Hook, April 16. Death of Mrs. Brown. Mrs. Hemans. Her Sacred Poetry - - - 219
346. To Mrs. Francis Boott, April 23. Regret on leaving Brae House - - - 221
347. To a Friend in America, April 26. Sir Robert Liston. Tomb in memory of Lady Liston. The Row Heresy. The Reform Bill - - 222
348. To Mrs. Izett, May 1. Mrs. Carter's "Letters to Miss Talbot" - - - - - 225
349. To Mrs. Hook, May 23. Does not feel at home in her new house. Lines addressed to the Duc de Bordeaux - - - - - 226
350. To Mrs. Izett, June 26. Death of Sir William Grant - - - - - 228
351. To her Son, July 24. Advice during indisposition 230
352. To the same, July 29. Death of Mr. Maconochie. Mr. and Mrs. Horace Gray from America - 232
353. To Mrs. Smith, Sept. 19. Visit to Inverleithen. Its situation and scenery. Paley's "Natural Theology" - - - - - 233
354. To Mrs. Hook, Nov. 28. Inverleithen continued. Death of Sir Walter Scott, and reflections on his character - - - - - 236

1833.

355. To Mrs. Hook, Jan. 7. Sir Charles Forbes. His kindness in franking her letters. Mr. Thomas Hamilton, author of "Cyril Thornton." Sir William Hamilton. Scott and Byron - - - 239
356. To Mrs. Smith, Jan. 26. Death of Mr. James Ballantyne. The Annual Obituary for 1833. Doctrine of Assurance - - - 242
357. To a Friend in America, April 10. Not indulgent to widows marrying. Marriage of her son. Emi-

LETTER PAGE

gration of the better classes to America. Mrs. Trollope's American Travels. Approves of the early marriages of the Americans - - 244

358. To Mrs. Smith, Aug. 27. Second visit to Inverleithen. Excursion to St. Mary's Loch. Calls on the Ettrick Shepherd - - - 247

359. To Mrs. Izett, Aug. 29. Inverleithen continued. Excursion to Melrose and Abbotsford. Picture of Miss Anne Scott - 250

1834.

360. To Mrs. Hook, Jan. 29. Mr. Henry Thornton and his family. Sir R. H. Inglis. Dr. Chalmers. His late fine speech - - - 253

361. To the same, March 12. The Rev. Mr. R——. Disapproves of Novels in High Life. Mr. Thomas Hamilton. His marriage to Lady Townshend Farquhar - - - - 255

362. To the same, April 17. Pleased with Mr. Walter Hook's sermon. The English church. Life of Crabbe. Burke, Scott, and Byron. Has entered on her eightieth year - - - 257

363. To Mrs. Smith, April 22. Dislikes all assumption of superior piety - - - 259

364. To a Friend in America, June 22. Description of her daughter-in-law, Mrs. J. P. Grant - 262

365. To a Friend, July 12. Dissuasion against depending upon literature as a mean of living - 265

366. To Mrs. Izett, July 14. Improvement in her own health. Rev. Mr. O'Sullivan. The Irish Church 267

367. To Mrs. Hook, Aug. 14. Visit to Bellahouston. "Life of the late Bishop of Limerick." Mrs. Henry Erskine - - - - 269

368. To Mrs. Smith, Aug. 15. Is reading the Life and Letters of Hannah More - - - 271

369. To the same, Aug. 28. The same subject - 273

LETTER PAGE
370. To a Friend in America, Oct. 20. Bellahouston. Pleasant intercourse with Mrs. Smith - 274
371. To Dr. Francis Boott, Nov. 28. Death of Mrs. Horace Gray of America - 277

1835.

372. To a Friend in America, March 18. The Reform Bill. Coleridge. His lately published "Remains" 279
373. To Mrs. Hook, April 23. Death of Mrs. Henry Mackenzie and Miss Mackenzie. Delicate health of her daughter-in-law - - - 281
374. To Mrs. Hook, May 27. Mr. Thomas Hamilton and Lady Townshend Farquhar visit Edinburgh. Mr. Grant of Glenmorriston, a candidate for Inverness-shire. Lord Glenelg. Introduces Mr. Henry Stuart - - - - 283
375. To Mrs. Izett, Aug. 14. Aberdour and Elie. Spends part of the summer there - - 285
376. To a Friend in America, Sept. 10. The Quarterly Review. Miss Kemble's American Journal. Washington Irving's "Visit to Abbotsford." Sir John M'Neill. Mr. Preston - - 288
377. To Mrs. Hook, Dec. 19. Illness of her daughter-in-law. Death of Mrs. Hemans. Her poetry and character. Duchess of Angoulême - 290

1836.

378. To Mrs. Smith, Jan. 1. Reflections on the new year. Sir Robert Liston - - - 293
379. To Mrs. Hook, March 1. Present state of the Church. Southey's Life of Cowper. Her own privations and advantages - - - 294
380. To the same, May 3. Miss Farquhar's marriage to Col. Grey. Lamartine's Travels in Palestine. The Irish clergy - - - 298

LETTER PAGE

381. To Miss Anne Dunbar, July 10. Life of Hannah More. Mrs. Smith of Jordanhill. Their long mutual friendship - - - - 300
382. To Mrs. Izett, Sept. 28. Thanks for a present of fruit. Life of Hannah More - - 302
383. To Mrs. Smith, Nov. 7. Has removed to Manor Place. The late Duke of Gordon. Mr. Thomas Campbell calls on her - - - 304
384. To Mrs. Hook, Dec. 10. Her late severe illness. Thanks for a portrait of Dr. Hook. Capt. Hall's Work on Styria - - - 307

1837.

385. To Mrs. Smith, Jan. 1. Reflections on the new year 309
386. To Mrs. Hook, March 30. Dangerous illness of her daughter-in-law. Mr. Walter Hook's late preferment - - - - - 311
387. To a Friend in America, May 15. Death of her daughter-in-law, Mrs. J. P. Grant - - 313
388. To Mrs. Izett, June 30. Queen Victoria. Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter Scott - - 314
389 To Mrs. Smith, July 12. Their mutual and long friendship. Peculiarities of their respective situations in life - - - - 316
390. To Mrs. Hook, Dec. 8. Death of Miss Eliza Farquhar. Lockhart's Life of Scott. Mr. William Cumming. The Rev. Dr. Mackay of Dunoon - 318

1838.

391. To Mrs. Grant of Kincorth, Jan. 28. Condolence on the death of her grand-daughter - - 321
392. To Mrs. Hook, Feb. 1. Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter Scott - - - 323

LETTERS.

LETTER CCLV.

TO MRS. GORMAN.

Edinburgh, 9th July, 1822.

My dear Friend,

I HAVE received your letter with much satisfaction; the intelligence it contains is to me very gratifying. Your Catherine, whom I feel much inclined to call mine also, could never be happy with a commonplace person; and I rejoice to hear that Mr. Wills is in every respect so much a man after her own heart, and of congenial tastes and pursuits.

I think the Church, even in a worldly sense, is comparatively a sanctuary of peace; and that, if people bring their mind to their condition, I know no class who enjoy so much safety and rational happiness, — whose families are so well brought up, or whose income is so well managed in general, and goes so much further than the same sum usually does with persons in any other profession. Of a clergyman nothing is requisite even to his worldly prosperity, but that he should be a Christian; that is, that he should be humble, acquiesce thankfully in the lot assigned to him, and be earnestly desirous to do his duty.

Without including those whom circumstances enable to be charitable and hospitable, or whom superior abilities qualify for illuminating the path assigned to them, the simplest in mind and manners, the humblest in intellectual attainments, if they are sincere in their profession and earnest in performing their labours of love, will in time be objects of esteem and affection to the people around, though not exactly of the same way of thinking.

You must have grieved at the death of your Primate* under such afflicting circumstances; it is a tale of woe that must reach the hardest heart; — judge then how it must be felt by me, who had experienced the utmost kindness and attention from Mrs. Stuart, who happened to be in London when I was there last. She was brought to visit me by her cousin Mrs. Fielding, of the Palace, and after that brought her brother Granville Penn and his wife to spend an evening with me: I saw her afterwards in her own house, and was sorry to go to Sunbury before she went away. I saw the Primate only once.

I am glad you are so pleased with the "Fortunes of Nigel," which I consider as a wonderful effort of genius, ever new and inexhaustible. Who but the Knight of Abbotsford could lead you through Alsatia, and the other scenes of vice and folly, without awaking a blush on the cheek of genuine delicacy. Yet I had a letter from a friend in the South, who had not then seen the book, in which she informs me,

* The Hon. William Stuart, Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of all Ireland, died from poison, having swallowed, through mistake, an embrocation for medicine, 6th May, 1822.

that in England it is accounted a failure. Honest John Bull has not seen such a failure on his side of Tweed since Shakspeare's time.

We have lately suffered much anxiety about Mary, and were brought at one time even to dread the approach of a typhus fever. Thank God, she is now doing well, and all our fears are over. I have only room to add my love to dear Catherine, and to wish a place kept for me in your mother's memory, being ever yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLVI.

TO MRS. COLONEL WHITE, GEORGE'S STREET.

Prince's Street, Monday morning.

My dear Mrs. White,

This threatening day prevents my coming to sit with you as I intended. I think of you, however, very often, and enter fully into the sorrow you feel for the loss of your very estimable friend. Your grief is of that virtuous and amiable kind, that, though concerned to see you suffer, a true friend could scarcely wish you to suffer less. I know well how slight a hold friendship shown essentially, or benefits received, have on the worldly, or, what is much the same, the vulgar mind: to feel and estimate such justly is of itself a happiness, but, like every other enjoyment, has its drawback when we are deprived of it. We must weep when the tender tie

that binds us to the virtuous and estimable, whom such kindness has endeared to us, is broken; but it is in the dew of such tears that the soundest reflections, the justest opinions, and the brightest hopes, are often known to spring up.

I send you two little volumes, which I think you will do well to make Louisa and the boys read when they are in the country. The young people of the present day are engaged in such a variety of pursuits that their knowledge in some important points must needs be superficial,—for example, the Old Testament history. I hope I do not betray the good cause when I express a doubt whether it were not as well, at an early age, that they knew the Old Testament through the medium of such a compendium as I send you, as through the entire text. It will make a story for a leisure hour to tell you how the author, Mrs. Hall of Philadelphia, happened to send me this book, accompanied and followed by some excellent letters. I never saw her in my life, nor heard of her till her letter reached me with this present.

By leaving Edinburgh before the King's visit you will escape the prevalent mania on the subject, which is very strong at present, and with none stronger than with those who affect a dislike to royalty. I am, dear Mrs. White, yours, very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLVII.

TO MRS. WILLS*, BAGOT STREET, DUBLIN.

My dear Mrs. Wills, Edinburgh, 30th October, 1822.

Could you, or even could I, suppose the possibility of your being happily united to the very deserving man of your choice, and my being among the last to congratulate you on the most desirable as well as most important event of your life? Yet so it is; and you will not be much surprised when I tell you, with a sensation like that of a person looking back on a tremendous gulph from which he has just escaped, why I have still delayed. My dear, my invaluable Isabella has been in serious danger, in consequence of an inflammatory attack of the lungs; and days and nights have passed with me like a dreary dream, since her illness became serious. She is now slowly, though, I trust, surely recovering. Isabella is so unlike the people of this world, and so fit, if we may presume to say so "of any mortal mixture of earth's mould," for the next, and her many labours of love have so worn out her constitution, that one cannot avoid trembling when the summons, so happy for her, seems impending. I trust she is for the time restored to my prayers, as well as those of many others who fully appreciate her modest retiring worth.

A fair and amiable countrywoman of yours, Miss Mercer by name, has been an unspeakable comfort to

* Formerly Miss Catherine Gorman.

me in these dark days of wretched solicitude. She was here on an excursion with some friends five years ago, when she was introduced to me. I was very much pleased with her at the time, but had nearly forgotten her in the constant succession of figures that pass like visions before me, when a lady, her particular friend, called with a letter, in which she expressed a strong wish to live with me. It seems she is now alone in the world, having survived her parents and ten brothers and sisters, most of whom grew up to maturity, and then died of consumption. The best years of her life have been spent in nursing invalids; and, in consequence of those painful pilgrimages which she made for their health, she has spent much time in Devonshire. I shall say more of her again, and really cannot say enough of those excellent qualities of head and heart which have been called forth by the present crisis. I should tell you, in addition to all solid and valuable qualities, that her exterior is prepossessing, and her manners pleasing and elegant.

Do you remember Moffat, and the good old Dr. Rogerson, who, after spending nearly fifty years in the splendid court of Russia among nobles and princes, came so judiciously home to enjoy his very large fortune among his humble relations,—purchased four baronies,—planted them with his kindred, and finally made the wilderness blossom as the rose? Would not one think it a pity such a man should die? Yet dead he is to all the purposes of life. Do you remember our going out to Dumcrieff, where he was enlarging and finishing a fine house where he was to wear out his latter days in peace, in the bosom

of his family? All was ready, and the family preparing to remove, when he was visited—in his eightieth year — with a paralytic stroke, and has had another since.

I fear you do not know enough of our elegant sage Henry Mackenzie, to be glad that his eldest son, a sound and powerful Scotch lawyer, and a most worthy and able man, is made a Lord of Session, and that Holt Mackenzie, his youngest, whose attainments made him looked up to in India, has lately been appointed to one of the highest situations there which Government has to bestow. You cannot think what satisfaction these promotions have given, and, what is wonderful, to all parties.

Adieu, my dear Mrs. Wills: commend me to your lord, of whom I have heard much from different quarters, and all good: I should like him for having a taste so like my own. Mary and Isabella send you their loves; mine you have always, for I am, very truly, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLVIII.

TO MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, First day of the year 1823.

Once more my affectionate good wishes welcome for you, as for all others most dear to me, another year. I welcome it for you as continuing to you

many blessings and much usefulness, and to your progeny a parent honoured and beloved, living for them only, and hourly contributing in various ways to their comfort. To myself I welcome it, as it may possibly be an added year, giving me that space for repentance which I greatly need, and perhaps the further trials and sorrows, which may yet be necessary to divorce my hopes and wishes from a world that has too long and too anxiously engrossed them.

My heart at present overflows with humble gratitude for the restoration of one of my chief earthly blessings, of which till now I thought myself very insecure: indeed, I know that I ought still to mix trembling with my joy, though, at present, my dear Isabella seems evidently far advanced in the way of recovery.

You will wonder to hear that, unless by short glimpses in a forenoon, I have not seen any of your young people since they came. This day I have been agreeably interrupted by Mrs. James Smith, who sat with me a good while, and was succeeded by other visitors, so that I must conclude hastily; you will therefore be surprised with the sight of white paper, an emblem of purity which I do not much affect when writing to you. Adieu, dear friend, affectionately, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLIX.

TO MRS. COLONEL WHITE, GEORGE'S STREET.

My dear Mrs. White, Prince's Street, Friday morning.

It will cheer your benevolence to find that I am now enabled to send you a very favourable report of Isabella. She works, reads, and, in short, does every thing but come out of her room, in which she is to dwell safely till invited forth by the first primrose.

I was persuaded to dine out yesterday, with Miss Mercer, at Mr. Smith's. It might almost be called a dinner of authors and artists: at the head of the last was Sir Henry Raeburn, and of the first John Wilson,—if, indeed, the benign influence of Dr. Brewster's modest worth did not claim precedence. There was much good and lively talk at dinner, and some good music in the evening. I never saw the laird and lady appear to such advantage.

I am quite at a loss what new books to recommend to you, because I think you know as many as I do. There is a very elegant and pleasing book, the title of which I do not remember; it is written by a son of Mr. Adolphus the barrister, a youth about twenty-two, and contains the result of more reading and reflection, more delicacy of taste and accuracy of judgment, than one would suppose attainable at that early period. It is moreover very entertaining, which you will wonder at, when you know that the whole purport of the volume is to show the impossibility of the Scotch novels being written

by any one but the author of Marmion. If your brother has not seen them, Simond's Travels must afford him not merely amusement, but new and impartial views of many things which are too familiar to us to strike observation or awake reflection; I know no book of the kind that contains so much sense and truth. I speak of the Tour in Britain. That in Switzerland has the same attractions, only that the history and policy of the little cantons possess no lively interest; but where he merely tells what he sees and feels, your attention is chained down by the powers of genius and sensibility. Though it is not exactly a lady's book, to a classical taste "Valerius" will have attraction. John Lockhart, the supposed author of this last, has just published a very elegant volume of translations from the Spanish. I delight in old ballads of all descriptions; and there is in these an engaging mixture of primitive simplicity with chivalry and devotion equally tinctured with romance. This dull quiet morning has left me at leisure to bestow much of my tediousness on you. I am, dear Mrs. White, much yours,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCLX.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 10th February, 1823.

I did hear of your late illness, and was much more alarmed and concerned than I ought to be, considering that, to us both, the time is so short. But I have outlived so many dear friends, that I find myself growing poor in this respect, — the only one in which I ever was rich; and I could not think, without a feeling of anticipated desolation, of outliving you.

I was a good deal surprised to hear that Dr. Chalmers is to give up his church in Glasgow for a professorship in St. Andrew's; yet it is reasonable as well as charitable to think well of his motives. He may have felt his health, and, what is of infinitely more importance, his faculties, his whole mental system perhaps, yielding to the incumbent weight of all that he has done, and all that he has projected. I heard, that before the door opened to him at St. Andrew's, he spoke of relinquishing a burden he found himself no longer able to bear; and when asked what pecuniary resources he would find to replace the income thus given up, he said, he could support his family by authorship. Of this I have some doubts; for, from the specimens of his writings that I have seen, I can hardly suppose him to be long a popular writer. To you only I say, that I think he has nearly exhausted his favourite topic, Civic

Economy. The ruling star of his life seems to be the desire of regenerating in Scotland, and creating in England, that noble spirit of independence, founded on trust in the mercies of God and deep humility and submission, which alone can make the condition of the labouring poor endurable in this age. I do not accuse him of attacking windmills, but I fear that, in this adventurous course, he will meet with more gigantic obstacles. But it is not for us to judge what may result from so much talent and so much ardour, if accompanied and sanctioned by a blessing from above.

I dined at your son's house last week, and never saw a dinner better arranged, or a company better assorted. This last is by far the most difficult part of the business, and that on which the whole grace of an entertainment depends, when it rises above the mere mortal joys of eating and drinking. Mrs. Smith's beauty is not a little admired, and James appears, of course, to more advantage as he is better known. Mrs. Smith's children do her the greatest credit; I never saw creatures more promising, or better brought up. I am, ever affectionately, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXI.

TO MRS. BROWN, GLASGOW.

My dear Mrs. Brown, Edinburgh, 13th February, 1823.

I think the challenge lies on my side, for to the best of my recollection I wrote last.

I am very sorry that your daughter-in-law, Mrs. William, has so much to suffer. To me she has a peculiar attraction that I cannot exactly define: when I say she is lady-like, I mean much more than the outward semblance, something indicative of a composed, well-regulated mind. It was Lord Bolingbroke that said he never knew a very estimable female that had not delicate health. . . . . .

Dr. Chalmers stood, and still stands, very high with me, for many reasons. One forcible motive of my admiration was that of seeing genius—that rare and precious gift, seldom bestowed, and still more seldom sanctified—seeing a touch of this nature illuminating the path of holiness was indeed desirable. I was dazzled, but not blinded by its lustre. You are, though you ought not to be so, surprised to find that what you took for a planet is merely a comet, not formed to move in a regular orbit, yet, from that very circumstance, attracting more attention than the Pleiades themselves, because their sweet influence is too regular to excite wonder. The fact is, that your admiration was too great to last, considering it was dust you doated on all the while; and the genius, or mind, or what you please to call it, of Dr. Chalmers was too large to be

confined in the wooden pulpit of St. John's.* Seriously, I rather incline to think that, in the motives he assigns for resigning his charge, he neither deceives himself nor you; at the same time I imagine, if his mind had not been overwrought by intense speculation on matters beyond the boundaries of his immediate function, he would not have been so soon disabled from discharging its duties.

I have been agreeably interrupted by a much valued and pretty frequent visiter — Mr. Henry Mackenzie, who is more animated, more correctly informed and pleasant, than any young person I know. A-propos to what is very pleasant, very lively, and full of sense and information: if you find time or inclination to read a small volume, ask for the lately published Life of John Home, by Henry Mackenzie. It will give you a distinct and faithful picture of the society and manners of Edinburgh, at the period when it first rose to distinction from the number of highly-gifted persons who adorned every profession, and shed a lustre on the land of their nativity.

Have you heard any thing of a book which every body (meaning every idle Athenian eager for novelty) is now reading? It is called the "Confessions of an English Opium-eater." Many strange things and persons have I encountered in my journey through life, and among the rest this same Opium-eater. I spent an idle half day talking with him fourteen years ago in London, when he was a student at Oxford, and met him once since. I directly recognised him

* Alluding to Dr. Chalmers's removal from St. John's Church, Glasgow, to the University of St. Andrew's.

through the thin disguise in his book: I am since assured that I have not been mistaken. Ask more about him, if you have any taste remaining for oddities.

You will be glad to hear that Isabella's recovery is progressive: I am so thankful on this account that I see every object through a bright medium, and have no petty miseries; yet she is feeble and confined to her room, more, however, from precaution than necessity. Accept the kindest wishes for you and yours from your old and true friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 16th March, 1823.

To write frequently and fully to you has become with me a fixed habit, insomuch that when I omit it for any time, I feel as if I had not only neglected a duty, but missed a pleasure. I did indeed write a long letter to your sister, which I thought it possible she might show you: since that I have had my few spare hours occupied in what you may think a very idle manner. Old Mr. Henry Mackenzie, whom every one looks up to now, as the patriarch of literature in Edinburgh, set a task to me which I find much difficulty in fulfilling. He says I translate well from the Gaelic: I think so too, because it is the

only thing, in the way of writing, in which I could thoroughly please myself. However, it so happens that I have done nothing of the kind for above twenty years past; that the legendary songs, or poems rather, he has given me to translate are full of the old heroic Gaelic, much differing from common speech; and that when a hard word occurs I have no one here to help me out with it. Moreover, that old thief Time, so often detected and never punished, has made great depredations on my memory; so that what was once a very pleasing amusement is become a hard task. Why then (say you) do you undertake it, when your time could be so much better employed? I answer, Mr. Mackenzie is anxious for it; and he and his family have been all along so invariably kind and obliging, that I was really glad of an opportunity to oblige the old Evergreen. Though broken and feeble with years and ill-health, as far as the clay cottage is concerned, his mind is all alive and unbroken, and his conversation perfectly delightful.

Now it will be very ungracious in you to say, What is all this to you? I will then come nearer home, to tell you of a very pleasant airing I had with Mrs. James Smith the day before yesterday. We set out at eleven, called at Inverleith House, — proceeded to the chain pier at Newhaven, which is certainly a great but indescribable curiosity,— and then through Leith, which was looking thriving with its ships, and gay in bright sunshine. We afterwards drove up to the South Bridge, where your daughter and her cousin amused themselves with shopping, while I was fully as well amused with the living picture in that gay and

crowded street, which to me, who never go near a window, and had, in consequence of the cold weather, been confined all winter, was quite a show.

My dear Isabella is getting round again, I trust; but, without any serious cause of fear, my anxiety on her account has been severe. It is that state of health which is the result of long confinement, without change of air, to a patient enfeebled by a long succession of almost preternatural exertions in her attendance on the living and the dead. But she had a support which I trust will never fail her. Adieu, dear friend. Affectionately yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXIII.

TO MRS. HOOK, WHIPPINGHAM RECTORY, ISLE OF WIGHT.

Edinburgh, 13th April, 1823.

My dear Friend,

I have not lain upon roses this long anxious winter. I look back upon it as upon a dreary dream, — all hazy indistinctness in the recollection. But under the influence of humble, and, I hope, intense gratitude, renewed hope, and April sunshine, I have heart to write, and to confess that I know not at all whether you or I wrote last.

With regard to your young friend who brought a letter from you, I have seen very little of him, owing to the circumstance of my dear Isabella's illness having prevented our seeing any one but intimate friends

for some time. He is often met at Mrs. Wilson's, in Queen Street, with whose family we are very intimate; and a kind-hearted, worthy family they are, living gaily and sociably, but free of the nonsensical part of fashion, and the cold smooth heartless manners of the world. There is a distribution of talent in various proportions among all its members, a quick perception of the ludicrous, with the most genuine good-nature and perfect sincerity. They have a double claim on me from their strong attachment to my dear departed Moore. I may tell you, before I dismiss the Wilsons, what they think of your friend and theirs. He appears to them a young man very correct in his conduct, and of good disposition, but evidently born in the age of calculation,—a propensity of which we Scots, in revenge for the obloquy formerly thrown on us by John Bull, are very apt to accuse his calves. There is no doubt but there are among the inhabitants of the Northern Athens many who calculate very nicely; but they leave that to be discovered in their *conduct*, and take care that it does not appear in their conversation. Perhaps there is no place where gossipping discussions respecting the amount of individual incomes, and the prices of articles of luxury, are so seldom heard; yet people here think of these things, and struggle to attain them as much as others. Good taste keeps many things out of sight, which good feeling in a high-toned mind would not suffer to exist.

A-propos to all the evil propensities which high rents and exorbitant wealth have cherished, till, like the cuckoo's progeny, they turn the owners out of

their proper abodes: I hear the complaints that resound from every side, with the most philosophic indifference, and reserve my sympathy for great and real evils. As I never thought people essentially the better for the superfluities which the late unnatural state of things enabled them to possess, so I do not think them the worse for wanting them. The operation of strong medicines, though severe at the time, and taken with great reluctance, may be attended with beneficial effects in the long run. I therefore eat my cheap loaf quietly, and listen to all the whining and growling with exemplary composure. Two years keeping of Lent by the rich and fashionable on their own properties (where they ought always to have been) will not only fill gaps, but make them know and feel that they have capacities for rational pursuits, and that it is not necessary for beings born for immortality to be continually in motion like a pendulum, or amused like children. "A wrench from all they love, from all they are," even in this world, is necessary to make these phantoms of fashion know that there is a sober certainty of waking bliss, not to be found at Almack's or in a subscription-house; and those of them, in whom the rage for pleasure and expense has not obliterated the plainest dictates of common sense, will hereafter bless the wind that drove them into harbour.

Perhaps you would rather hear how I am managing my own petty concerns than how wisely I can remark on matters of greater consequence. Know then that, as far as mere advantage goes, I cannot boast of my success for some years past; but I hope, if I live,

to be easy ere long, according to my mode of considering myself easy; add that my son is likely to do very well in his profession in time, though he must not hope to walk on velvet in the beginning of his career.

I write in happy spirits, after a most anxious winter, occasioned by the tedious, and at one time alarming illness of my dear Isabella. Her recovery, which is now, thank God, pretty well advanced, has made me feel as if there was no such thing as care existing. But my letter is called for, and I must suddenly break off by telling you that I am ever, very truly, dear friend, yours and the Archdeacon's,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXIV.

TO MRS. COLONEL WHITE, GEORGE'S STREET.

Prince's Street, 15th May.

My dear Mrs. White,

If I did not sooner acknowledge your very kind and costly present of Constantia, it was not from being insensible of its value, and the far greater value of that regard of which this gift is an indication; but I have been every moment engaged either with or for some one who had particular claims on my attention.

What I consider as the best quality I ever possessed, I feel now, like every sublunary rose, is not without its thorns. I was ever most constant in

friendship, and, so far, have had my reward, that those friends who set out in life on a footing with me, but were fortunate enough to rise, as far as fortune goes, far above my level, have never neglected, far less forsaken me. I have, on the other hand, never forsaken, in my confined sphere of action, a friend, or the child of a friend: thus have my connexions, both in the upper and humbler paths of life, increased to an embarrassing degree. Yet if I have not all the calm tranquillity which should succeed a perturbated life, I have a degree of excitement which keeps my mind awake, and not only banishes languor, but the too frequent recollections of the painful — very painful past.

I shall very soon finish the Life of Swift*, which the great magician has made both authentic and interesting: I shall send it to you in a day or two. It is, I think, very instructive, and conveys a powerful lesson of humility, — the virtue most strongly impressed upon us by the precepts of our religion and the example of its Author, and yet the one least cultivated, indeed least understood in its full extent, by some good and serious people; — for it matters little on what one's pride is founded, so that it exists. I hope you will think mercifully of poor Swift, though it is now the fashion to abuse his memory. I am interrupted, and can only add that I am ever yours,

ANNE GRANT.

* By Sir Walter Scott.

Letter CCLXV.

TO MRS. WILLS, BAGOT STREET, DUBLIN.

Edinburgh, 15th May, 1823.

My dear Catherine,

By a letter from Mrs. West I find that heavy clouds have intervened to darken your morning of wedded felicity. How much have the best, the happiest, and even the most prosperous, to endure through life from those accidents from which neither worth, wealth, nor wisdom afford a defence. There is a certain quantity of bitter poured into every cup, even the most overflowing. None but mere sensualists escape the common lot: their hearts are invulnerable to the tender sympathies that are the source of so much pain and pleasure. As long as health serves them, the inferior part of their nature is gratified, and in that gratification the spirit is absorbed: but their day comes too; bile and indigestion call for the physician or the pistol,—and there is an end to one world and a beginning to another. I would say that, as this portion of wholesome, and no doubt necessary bitter is ever mixed in the cup of life, it is better we should meet with some of it early: it is like the seasoning fever of the tropical climates. We know experimentally that endurance is one of our first duties, and learn the best possible lesson,—that to suffer patiently, to submit meekly, and to enjoy thankfully the bright gleams permitted to us, is what makes life what it was meant to be,

a successful struggle with evils of short duration, cheered by many mingled blessings here, and more blessed still in the endless perspective opened to us by Him who was exalted through sufferings, of the bitterness of which we can form no conception.

Isabella got much better after the severity of winter was over; and when I had got her up stairs to a larger and more airy apartment, I was as glad and as thankful as if I had never seen sorrow. But after going on very well for some time, an influenza, which was raging through the town like a pestilence, seized on her weak frame, and, shaking it nearly to dissolution, renewed all our fears. Now, thank God, she is better, and in a fair way to do well.

We have lately been reading Sketches of the Lives of the British Novelists, by the indefatigable and incomparable Walter Scott, and have been particularly pleased with those of Sterne, Goldsmith, Johnson, and Mackenzie, which I would recommend for your perusal. The justice he does to the majestic moralist delights me. Perhaps you do not know of my profound veneration for this surly sage; but I am such an admirer of his peculiar style of excellence, that I can easily endure defects that bring him within my reach, and save me the effort of standing on tiptoe to contemplate his gigantic mind.

Offer my kind regards to Mr. Wills and your mother; and believe me, dear Mrs. Wills, yours, most affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXVI.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 16th May, 1823.

Can you guess why I have taken large paper? It is, first, because I mean to write to *you*, and next, because I am unfitted by a tedious vigil last night for doing any thing else. I can in consequence neither read nor work; and bad weather keeps me from the gardens in front, my usual resource when I labour under this kind of disability. Then I write to some of the friends,—alas, now few indeed,—to whom I can scatter my ink and thoughts without constraint. Thus talking silently without effort or answer, I go on, and by degrees recover the tone of my mind, and the capacity of reading, working, or conversing. So, at your expense, I proceed.

First of all, you wish to know how your god-daughter Isabella goes on?—Very well indeed, for which I can never be thankful enough. But though her recovery, in its process, equals our most sanguine hopes, we shall treat and consider her as an invalid for a long time to come. The fact is, that, from her incessant and incredible exertions about the time of my accident and dearest Moore's concluding illness, her strength and spirits were so exhausted, that the wonder was, how she survived. She fatigued herself to a pernicious degree, last autumn, at the time of the King's visit, and after that, in making pilgrimages to the sick and the sorrowful in bad weather. But we

shall take care to prevent any of this costly philanthropy for the future.

We were surprised last Friday by a visit from H. L. as we were sitting down to tea. Accustomed as I was to his pre-eminent ugliness, I started when he came in. But under this exterior, to which a very good manner and address soon reconciles one, I really have not for a long while seen manners at once so modest, manly, and easy, or heard conversation so intelligent and in such good taste. He spent a little time at Paris on his way here; and we formed a more distinct idea of what is going on in France and Spain, from his moderate, dispassionate statement, than from all we see or hear otherwise. He says, there is a certain lady of the royal family, whose influence, though not prominent, or indeed scarcely visible, is unbounded. This is the Duchess of Berri, mother to the heir apparent. The catastrophe which made her a widow has so impressed her imagination, that she thinks no measures too strong to prevent the recurrence of such scenes. With all the appearance of the most feminine softness and timidity, she is clever and bold-spirited, and seems to have thrown a spell over the old King and all his family. H. L. says, if there should be a revolution, it will be in favour of the Duke of Orleans, and not of the young Napoleon.

But why should I speak of kings and princesses when I have a subject so much better in the good and admirable "M. Jones?" Who is M. Jones, you ask? Indeed I do not know; but what entitles her to your attention, you shall hear presently. My son met

with one of Constable's partners three weeks ago, who told him, that if he would call at their shop, he would show him a curious letter about his (my son's) mother. He was shown a letter, such as a plain shopkeeping person might be supposed to write, the purport of which was to inquire if Mrs. Anne Grant, of Laggan, was alive, and where she lived, for the writer wished to send her a box, containing a present. They answered the letter, of course; and conjecture was not a little puzzled to guess whether the present would really come, and what it would be. Last week the box arrived, which contained,—first, black silk (very good), for a dress to Mrs. G.; three shawls, one a very handsome large silk one, and two very comely ones of a new kind of nondescripts, all calculated for a widow's garb; item, a pair of excellent black silk stockings; item, six beautiful French cambric pocket-handkerchiefs, all marked with my cypher impressed on symbolical figures,—an urn on one, a garland on another, and all the rest differing from each other, but all fanciful, and what we considered appropriate; likewise, two pairs of gloves; and finally, neatly wrapped up in paper, a gold sovereign to pay the carriage, and a very neat and business-like invoice of the whole.

But then the letter along with them, in native beauty, simplicity, and originality, was worth the whole. You would be shocked were I, my very self, to tell you how long my Letters (the printed ones) had been the delight and consolation of this excellent person,—for excellent she must be, supposing me to be very different from what she thought me. The ardent

love of merit, should it be merely imaginary and delusive, exists only in those fine minds which are accustomed to delight in contemplating goodness in its original source. She says, towards the end of her letter, "I am not a person of birth or fortune, but a lowly thistle on the plain, sheltering some more delicate plants under my rugged stem. May I hope you will let me know something of your health and spirits, and of the welfare of your family. Let me know if your correspondents continue faithful to you in this world, or if they wait your arrival in the plains of light," &c.

Is not all this something very much out of the common way; and is not this kindness from a plain person, such as I suppose Miss M. Jones of Coalbrookdale to be, more gratifying than if a very fine or high-bred person had sent me a far more valuable or showy present? These are the cordials which the mercy that has been mingled with many bitter sufferings has afforded to cheer my path. Adieu, dear friend: I am much the better for scrawling when I really could not do any thing else. I am, as ever, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCLXVII.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 16th July, 1823.

My dear Friend,

I hope you will accept my writing to you at present as an instance of more than common affection. I know you feel as much for me as one must that loves me, and knew the worth, the incomparable worth of what I have lost,*—of that guardian angel who was spared to us so long, that she might, with the truest judgment, the tenderest affection, and the most unwearied patience, support, assist, and comfort the sufferers in her family; while her delicate frame and sensitive mind seemed to mark her out as the person who of all others most needed support. But, in all the severe exigencies we were called to encounter, she seemed inspired with a power of exertion and endurance almost miraculous.

I will not tell you of our grief. How needless that! For me, I have a mind subdued by many sorrows, and am too near the end of my journey to repine because Isabella was spared the anguish of surviving me, and all that a worn-out frame and overwrought mind has to encounter in life's decline. He, who in mercy to us bestowed this precious gift to be a blessing while she remained, has in mercy to herself brought her to peace and felicity, ere the evil days came, in which she should say she had no

* Mrs. Grant's daughter, Isabella, died at Edinburgh on 16th June, 1823.

pleasure in them. Think not of me, but give all your pity to Mary; the love between them was such that it appeared as if one could not survive the other; the whole stock of affection divided among the lamented ones now mingled with the dust, seemed all centred in each other. Mary, however, makes wonderful efforts to struggle with calamity.

My Isabella had been confined mostly to bed all last winter, yet with little suffering, no apprehension, and more steady cheerfulness than ever I saw her enjoy since the death of our dear lovely Charlotte. We were half deceived, though she grew evidently weaker. Death came at last in so gentle a form that it was more like a translation. Far from feeling its approaches, she said some encouraging words to me scarcely two minutes before she expired. All gentle and modest as she was, every one who knew her intimately looked on her with chastened reverence, produced by the sanctity of her manners and the purity of her mind. Yet no one said less of the subject nearest her heart than she: her very piety was like herself — modest and retiring. — "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Let me hear from you soon: the more I lose of what is dear and valuable, the closer I cling to friends such as you, — "peculiar people, death has made them dear." Remember me kindly to the Archdeacon, his son, and his daughter; and know me, ever most affectionately and unalterably, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCLXVIII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 21st July, 1823.

You may well be afraid, my dear friend, to hear from me, who have always some fresh tale of sorrow to communicate, not only sad in itself, but calling up all those images of sadness that are too habitual to your own mind.

If this stroke breaks the ligature that still has held me to a deceitful world, I shall hereafter think of it with more serenity than I can do at present. She is graciously released from what was from the first a frail and feverish being; and certainly, in the course of her life, her labours of love, her exertions for those who were unspeakably dear to her, and her deep anguish when deprived of them, might long since have exhausted a less tender mind and less sensitive frame: but she was supported, by strength not her own, to be a guardian angel to her distressed family. Though not called to the duties of the conjugal state, such were her trials and such her conduct under them, that it might be truly said of her, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." Were our grief proportioned to the value of what we have lost, it would be sinful in its excess: but I trust we have profited more by many afflictions than to repine at her felicity.

I have long endeavoured, even while my heart-strings were wrung at such partings, to think of every alleviation, and say to myself all that piety,

friendship, or compassion might suggest to those that mourned for me, and tried to comfort me. I hope the topics proposed in your letter have not been unavailing. The time is short, and she could scarce have borne my loss as I am enabled to bear hers; few indeed were capable of such pure unmingled attachment: affection in her was like a hallowed flame, fed by all the powers of her mind, and all the feelings of her heart. Passion, vanity, interest, selfishness in all its nameless forms, had no place there; all, all was love — efficient love. It was the element in which she existed, and still brightened to the last moment. Easily she threw off the thin-worn robe of mortality, through which the radiant spirit shone clearer when about to quit its covering. My own, my beloved and most endearing Isabella, so long the support and guardian of us all, was not to be surprised by death, for which her whole life was a humble and earnest preparation: she might most truly be said to work out her salvation with fear and trembling. Never surely did death assume a milder form than when he approached her unseen and undreaded. As I said on another occasion of this beautiful spirit, — though the violet is withered, its odour remains. . . . . Of Mary I can only say that she bears as a Christian ought the loss of a treasure for which nothing in this world can compensate. I can only add, that, even under this affliction, I feel your sympathy, and value your friendship, and am, most affectionately, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXIX.

TO MRS. WILLS.

Edinburgh, 2d September, 1823.

My dear Catherine,

It is not long since your affectionate letter and most acceptable present reached me. Forgive me for not sooner acknowledging both: your experience in that dark school in which I have been so long an unprofitable scholar will already, novice as you are, teach you how unwillingly one takes the pen when there is only a choice of two evils,—when you must either, by pouring out all the bitterness of your own feelings, wound those of another from a selfish desire for sympathy, or put on to a dear friend that air of light indifference, under which one takes shelter to shun the repulsive cant of formal condolence from minds incapable of looking into "the bottom of your grief." In the present instance there is no occasion for shunning either. I need not describe to you what, under your own recent deprivation of your dear sister, you feel far too sensibly yourself; as little need I shun such condolence as you are capable of administering.

Writing to you, and knowing you as I do, it is unnecessary to urge upon you those topics with which hard necessity has made me long familiar—of resignation to the Divine will, of the actual certainty that those who have walked humbly upon earth, trusting to their Saviour's merits for salvation, will be supported through the dark valley of death by the same

mercy that guided their steps in comparative innocence in the days of their probation,—and that the separation in any case cannot be long, in some very short. All this we say, and at intervals think; but we see it in dim and distant perspective, veiled occasionally with mists and shadows. Futurity is brought nearer and nearer to our view by every repeated stroke; and without this merciful disposition of things we could never support a succession of those strokes which are so terrible to the unpractised in adversity. But every tie that is broken loosens the mind more and more from this world; the very agony of reiterated suffering forces us to take shelter in the contemplations suited to our state, instead of dwelling, as the feebleness and selfishness of our nature would incline us to do, on the dark and silent grave to which the beloved objects are consigned,—on the cold and painful vacancy left in our own hearts, and on all the love and all the worth that endeared them to us. And in order to check as far as possible this current of thought, and to habituate ourselves to muse on what they have escaped by having the journey of life so soon concluded, and being saved from the bitterness of surviving dear friends, and the many other evils that await the decline of life, we should accustom ourselves to think much, and even to speak much, of all that we loved and admired in the departed. This at first is painful, but a familiar theme becomes less and less so. There is so much of suffering to be met with in the most prosperous life, that the preparation of the mind for enduring even these privations, which we cannot think of in prospect with-

out shuddering, is perhaps the best lesson we can learn.

I am tedious without being, perhaps, after all, intelligible; but an example may make me so. Mrs. Unwin, the friend of Cowper, felt that the Divine inflictions were mercies, and to be received as such, as sensibly as we feel that the shower, which wets our garment, refreshes the dried-up soil. What we regard, in a speculative way, as a thing we ought to believe, was, with her, like the evidence of the senses, and enabled her to bear the severest evils with unshaken and even cheerful patience. In vain would those who cherish and brood over sorrow excuse themselves, by depreciating as a kind of apathy the lively faith which supported this Christian heroine, even under the death of her most excellent and only son. What but sensibility of the purest, highest kind led her to do and suffer, in the cause of friendship, more than ever the courage of man or the love of woman achieved? Dying for one's friend was nothing to this. Estranged from all social enjoyments, and having one's sole attention tied down, day after day, and year after year, to the most painful object that heart can conceive—the ghastly form and suspended faculties of a dear friend!—What a being must Cowper have been that could excite such a pure and fervent attachment; and how much beyond the conception of ordinary minds was the tenderness, the constancy, the fortitude, and, above all, the faith of this blessed woman! Lady Hesketh, the good, the generous, and the amiable, tried to fill her place, but sank under it. Miss Fanshawe, who was with Lady H. in the last

months of her life, told me that she never recovered the miserable winter she spent with her beloved cousin.

All these things have come the more vividly to my mind in consequence of a present sent me lately by a lady whom I never saw, but who has shown kindly feelings towards me in more than one instance; this is a life of Hayley, with that of his son, both written by himself. This is a sort of literary gossip that enchains your attention even when it does not meet your approbation. The vain and silly egotism, and the tiresome load of epithets which clogs his style with sickly affectation, revolt me so much, that I have barely candour enough left to give Hayley credit for kindness of heart, and steadiness of attachment. I began the life of his son, prepared to regard it with distaste, and to suppose that he had a son in his own likeness; but really the son has so much more sense than his father, so much genius, modesty, and manliness, and, best of all, so much quiet unpretending piety, that I was forced to do him justice. He was an admirable creature; and how he could escape infection in that school of affectation and sickly sensibility, is astonishing. I should have loved that boy for what he had, and admired him for what he had not: no pretension, no strings of epithets, no attempt at what the redoubted Andrew Fairservice calls *nipperty-tipperty* poetry, to which class much of Hayley's belongs. With Flaxman I am' charmed: his is genuine manly feeling, expressed with firmness and freedom, sound judgment, correct opinions, and steady principle.

My friends are all in the country, but, bad as the season was, there were never so many strangers from all quarters in town; they all bring letters to different people, but I am the only person to be found at home, and, were it not for good Miss Mercer, should have been at home by myself, for some time past. Mary was nearly sinking under the severest loss a human creature could sustain (for never was affection more fervent, than that which united her to the angelic creature who lived but to love and serve us all), when an old and dear friend, from America, induced her with much difficulty to accompany her family on an excursion to the West Highlands, which has done her much good. I must now conclude, and feel much the better for writing, reluctant as I was to begin. With best regards to Mr. Wills, I am, very much yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXX.

TO MRS. HOOK.

[Edinburgh, 12th December, 1823.

My most dear and constant friend through weal and woe, I have read your letter with painful interest, and all your sorrows and anxieties passed in review before me; not only so, but called up the remembrance of last winter, when all the sweet cheerfulness and buoyant hope of my angelic sufferer could not blind me to the impending stroke. But you are all better, thank God. What vigilant care is necessary, how-

ever, to preserve the blessing for which you have, I am sure, wrestled so fervently. Perhaps Dr. Hook's disorder may be the means of prolonging his life, by this vigorous and desperate attack upon his plethoric habit. But this bold and successful attack must be followed by a brisk and constant warfare against a still more insidious foe, against whom the opposing party must move as a mounted chevalier, with the spurs of activity and the armour of fortitude. Dare I name the enemy of the intellectual, the happy, and the easy tempered, whom I have ever held in foul scorn, but who has often subdued my betters? You know, though not willing to own, whom I mean. Poor Thomson, though unable to resist his power, erected by the aid of his fine fancy an aerial castle to warn others of the danger. Can you, in short, endure to hear the idol of your heart called indolent? and will you have resolution enough to teaze him if he omits riding, every day that the weather admits? Believe me, he will find a horse his best physician.

The summer which preceded this autumn of sorrow and fear seems to have begun auspiciously. The time you spent at Lord Pembroke's must have afforded the Archdeacon pleasure in regard to his taste for the fine arts, of which I think Wilton Castle contains many specimens. You will wonder how I should know any thing about such things. I have, however, become familiar with many of the more ancient seats of the nobility, through the medium of a very pleasant work, though the production of a vain heartless author. I speak of Horace Walpole, whose letters to Montague contain the most graphic de-

scriptions imaginable of those places, given with all the fidelity, ease, and vivacity that were peculiar to himself. When tired with hearing travellers (that is everybody, for who does not travel?) talking of Paris, I boast to them of the hidden treasures of painting and architecture in the untravelled counties of England, and of what a city London would be, if these were all, like French wealth and art, concentrated in the capital. . . . .

I do not know whether I succeed, but I am trying by these miscellaneous topics to amuse you, and find I amuse myself by so doing. I purposely shun anything that would lead you to drink up any share of those dregs of bitterness which remain in the cup, certainly wisely, and I hope kindly, appointed for me. Health I now enjoy to a degree that astonishes every one, and none more than myself: this is not altogether uninterrupted, but when a little of erysipelas, my only foe, is past, I forget it. My mind, though not so much broken as you might expect, is not free enough to suffer my body to be delicate.

About the middle of September we made our escape to the sea-side, a little to the eastward of Leith, where we found quiet and leisure, sea-air, and pleasant walks in sheltered woods, quite medicinal; and I, from a sort of watch-tower in my room, looking immediately over the sea, found that turbulent neighbour at times, particularly in my too early mornings, very companionable. We must, next time, meet on the neutral ground of the literature of the day. Meantime God bless you, my dear friends, prays your most truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXI.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 23d December, 1823.

I am lifting the veil from many incidents of my own eventful life, to show what can be endured, and how it should be. This, as far as it regards myself, is a sad awakening of the cruel pains of memory. †

* * * * * *

Speaking of books, we have been all much engaged with Jeremy Taylor of late. There is a new edition, preceded by an admirable life, by that most admirable person Reginald Heber. Read it by all means; such sound opinions, most happily yet simply expressed, so much learning without pedantry, and research without tediousness, so much piety without dogmatism or bigotry, are rarely met with. He—this eminent divine—goes to Calcutta in the very spirit of martyrdom; he carries all these fine and consecrated talents, all that wealth of knowledge, and that power of genius, to a region where they will be comparatively little understood or appreciated. You know, perhaps, that he goes out as Bishop. Mr. Canning, who greatly loves and admires him, urges him to stay for the first vacant English bishoprick. His brother, who has a large estate, and has no heirs, is equally averse to his going; but the highest and purest mo-

† Probably alluding to a detailed Memoir of her own life, begun at the request of a friend, but in which she made little progress beyond the years of infancy.

tives urge him to spend and be spent in the service of his Master. Adieu, dear, very dear friend, in haste,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 6th February, 1824.

My dear Friend,

Since I wrote last I have been in a state of entire seclusion, keeping a very strict Lent, reading and writing alike forbidden, and the excitement of seeing company considered worst of all: so I am comparatively thin, and very thankful for being so, and more particularly for my great escape from my late alarming fall.*

It is not often that so many are to be found in one place possessed of such amiable qualities and pleasing manners as the present inmates of my family; and it is not easy to say how much of family comfort depends upon such. I never talked of the faults or defects of those who dwelt under my roof: I think that exposing the foibles of young people under one's protection is neither the part of a gentlewoman or a Christian; but those at present under my care are all that I could wish, and they treat me with filial reverence. I speak of this with deep-felt gratitude to the Giver of all good; for, though I had not great faults to contend

* See the following Letter.

with on any occasion, I have had anxieties that, in my present state of mind and nerves, would be a great deal too much for me. These petty miseries that spring out of the earth, have not the consolations attending them that we ask and receive when the blow comes direct from above. I do not express this well, but you understand me.

Now as to books: I am very glad that my whispered approbation of his American Travels reached the ears of Mr. Duncan, since it gave him pleasure. He has filled up a hiatus; for a truth-telling book on that subject was much wanted, and his has the stamp and impress of candour and good feeling. How unlike the caricature satires of others, and the no less caricature eulogium of that Miss Wright,—

> "Whose praise defiles as if a fool should mean,
> By spitting in your face, to wash it clean."

Every encomium in favour of America, she follows up with abuse of her native country,—the glorious citadel of refuge for all that is admirable in laws, institutions, freedom, and pure faith.

Have you seen Henry Mackenzie's Life of John Home? It is a perfect picture, happily drawn and softly coloured, of what Edinburgh and the lights of human kind that adorned it were fifty years since. Lady Grizzel Baillie's Memoirs you must have read and liked: I feel more interested by her unadorned prose than by Miss Baillie's metrical sketch from it.

I have dipped in the new "Well*," which was fit and proper for me to do, as all the family were plash-

* "St. Ronan's Well," then newly published.

ing in it; and it is one of my duties to influence their judgments, as well as to lead their taste, if taste can be led. I differ from you and many others about this Well, and still hold to my old maxim, that "king's caff is better than ither folk's corn." We are, in the first place, startled at seeing an old friend with a new face: we have been accustomed to meet him in the familiar walks of natural feeling and character, or in the loftier scenes of courtly splendour, chivalrous manners, and romantic sentiments. The fashionables of the day, exaggerated as they are, among the idle and worthless, in those haunts of idleness and dissipation called watering-places, is quite a new field, in which there is not so much for the heart as in the former, nor so much to elevate and fill the imagination as in the latter. This work is, in short, what none of the rest were, an obvious intentional satire; and we do not so readily follow him in this new and thorny walk. The story, I grant, hangs very ill together, and so do Shakspeare's; but there is character, sense, and truth, and the moral is good. In short, though the caff may abound, it is still *king's* caff.

I was tempted to this long trespass on you by a visit from Mrs. Wilson, which I took very kindly, to ask my commands for the West, and here they are, from yours, most cordially,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCLXXIII.

TO MRS. HOOK, WHIPPINGHAM RECTORY, ISLE OF WIGHT.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 20th February, 1824.

You may believe it was not without a cause that your last interesting letter has been so long unanswered. I, too, have been unwell; but as my disorders were partly owing to accident, and not in the least productive of danger, I shall detail them as concisely as possible. On New-Year's-day, coming down stairs, with one hand on the railing and my faithful crutch in the other, I leant too hard on the first, and lost my balance. By a momentary impulse I threw myself back with such force that I received a severe wound on the back of my head, yet was not in the least alarmed or disconcerted,—thankful, on the contrary, that this providential impulse had prevented my falling forward and so incurring greater danger. My doctor thought the case serious, and not satisfied with starving and secluding me, he forbade pens and books, dreading lest the wound should bring on erysipelas; and so it did for all his precaution; but, as the eruption was merely confined to my face, it was not dangerous. Now, thank God, all this is over, and I am so well that I could, and would if possible, spare a little health to you who need it so much more.

It has been wisely ordered, that I, who have so many heartaches, never know what it is to have a headache, unless when I bring it on myself by

exertion too long continued: but I feel not the less for your's, assailing you as they do under the pressure of so many imperative duties. Need I tell you that I was grieved and alarmed by your account of the illness of the Archdeacon, whom I love not merely for his resembling in his best qualities one that I loved dearly, of whom, as well as of him, it might be said, "that he was made of the firm truth of honour:" I love him not the worse for resembling him in his defects. But why do I say this to such an idolater as you, who would think it sacrilege to impute defect to your abstract of perfection. Pray, however,—when you have the happiness of seeing him fairly set in motion,—implore him in my name to be more active and less contemplative. As for you, whom I consider as the greatest sufferer of the two, your kingdom is not of this world; nor indeed is that of any one whose heart is warmly affectionate, and whose mind is highly sensitive: these are plants belonging to a different climate, liable to be crushed and blasted in this stormy region, but fated to spread and flourish fair in the perpetual sunshine of a blessed immortality. This is the highest view of the matter: take a lower, yet very just one:—

> "The broadest mirth unfeeling folly wears
> Has far less joy than virtue's very tears."

The day is fast approaching when the sorrows we approve shall be more dear to recollection than what most call pleasures.

I am glad you found Mr. C. so agreeable: I have heard him very differently represented. Inge-

nious talents and agreeable manners he must needs have: one never can suppose Mrs. C., all charming as she is, giving her all for nothing. Yet, though the object of her choice should possess a thousand virtues and ten thousand accomplishments, I can never believe that her second marriage has made her happier. Less respectable it has certainly made her, on account of various disparities, that of age particularly. The pains she takes to proclaim her felicity produces the exact contrary effect. *You* never told me that you were happily married: that species of happiness, when it exists, is self-evident. Do not suppose me such a prude as to object to second marriages, as such: even in this country, where they occur much seldomer than with you, many excellent women have made a second marriage, and found it a happy one. But certainly the mother of a large family is not entitled to consult her own fancy at the expense of the feelings and, as it often happens, the fortunes of her children.

You will begin to think that I am nothing if not critical, and ask what is become of the candour and indulgence on which I was wont to be complimented. Why really, if one has been candid for more than threescore years, it is pretty well. You do not know what rue or euphrasy may have purged my visual nerve in later years; or perhaps as the mere organs of sight decay, the mental vision becomes more distinct. I am sorry for it, and would not wish the soft bright haze removed that heightens beauty and diminishes deformity.

Now for the neutral ground, namely books, which

is the more amusing for being also the debateable ground, and, what brings the analogy still closer, claimed alike by Scotch and English. We have what may be called a literary luxury in this house, for my son, now that he is fairly established, has the privilege of the Signet Library, which is well stocked and well chosen, and of the College Library, which is still more so; and half a dozen young advocates offer me the choice from theirs; and I get many presents of books, both from their authors and from my friends. Amidst this affluence of entertainment, and the claims of society, I have not much leisure for new books; yet I have read "Pen Owen," which was sent me by Mr. Henry Mackenzie, who liked it much. I thought there was much of exceeding good wit and sound argument in it. I have only got the first volume of the last novel, "Percy Mallory." It is written with considerable power, and the Grandisonian scenes are extremely amusing; but the dialogue, though clever and witty, has too much of the "snip-snap short and interruption smart," of the old comedy: you cannot fancy people playing thus at an intellectual shuttlecock. The author evidently trusts too much to his own powers; he is so pleased with the sparkles he continually strikes out, that he neglects probability and the conduct of the story, as also repose, forgeting that, in a picture, shade is necessary as well as light: to sum up all, he writes in too great a hurry. So does the Great Well-known; and his stories, also, often hang very loosely together: but then he stands, and will stand, alone; within that circle (of haste and carelessness) none dare walk but he.

Sitting up last night and rising early this morning, I have made out this meritorious though miscellaneous letter. I hope Georgiana is perfectly re-established, that her hair grows, and her strength with it, like Sampson's. I send love to divide among your children, the larger portion for the reverend Walter: Dr. Hook and Eliza hold together a pre-eminent place in the regard of your truly affectionate,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXIV.*

TO THE VERY REV. PRINCIPAL BAIRD, EDINBURGH.

Edinburgh, 25th February, 1824.

Reverend dear Sir,

I have every possible wish to comply with any request of yours, and not the less so as, in this instance, your wish would lead me to indulge an early propensity, which, though checked by many cares and many sorrows, may still, in some degree, exist.

I am the more willing to make the effort you desire, as I find you honour with your approbation an attempt of the same nature, which I had utterly

* This letter was written in answer to one from Principal Baird of Edinburgh, in which he stated, that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland were desirous to procure an addition of Paraphrases and Translations for the Psalmody of the Church of Scotland; and after adding that Sir Walter Scott, Miss Joanna Baillie, Mr. Montgomery, and others, had promised contributions, he requested that Mrs. Grant would also give her aid to the proposed Collection.

forgotten till your mention of it recalled it to my recollection.* I am perfectly aware that in this department my whole strength lies in an easy command of poetical language, a thing entirely distinct from genius, to which I honestly confess myself to have no claim. This humble talent I would willingly consecrate to the sacred purpose you speak of, and be satisfied with laying a turtle dove upon the altar, if I could not afford a lamb.

But the objection that I have always felt to have a conscientious weight when I have been solicited to write on religious subjects I find to be nearly insuperable. It is not modesty with regard to the powers given me, but a consciousness that, partly from situation, and, no doubt, partly from inclination not duly resisted, I have been led to lead a life, however decorous, too worldly to be consistent with pointing out a stricter path to others, than that in which I have walked myself. Falling thus far short of my own standard of duty, I can but touch the harp of Zion with a trembling hand, however desirous I may be to ransom some minutes, in this manner, from the stream of time, that is so fast escaping, and cannot run much longer with me.

I enclose a feeble attempt to embody thoughts and feelings which have been for some time familiar to me. If you approve of this, you shall hear again in the same way from, Reverend dear sir, your faithful, humble servant,

ANNE GRANT.

* Hymn for the Sons of the Clergy, published with Mrs. Grant's Poems, in 1803.

LETTER CCLXXV.

TO MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL, GLASGOW.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 7th April, 1824.

I am going to write a short civil letter, which, short as it is, will answer two good purposes; it will acknowledge the kindness of your last, and it will serve as a bulletin of that return of health for which I cannot be sufficiently thankful.

* * * * * *

You like to hear of books: we have been engaged in some very interesting ones. Mary received a present lately of two volumes of Cowper's last published letters*, in which the secrets of his prison-house are fully unfolded. They are chiefly addressed to Mr. Newton. I should like them better than Hayley's collection, if that were possible: you see Cowper oftener in his night-gown and slippers, — see Mrs. Unwin darning his stockings, — get an occasional peep into the economy of his kitchen, and have the pleasure of rejoicing over certain barrels of oysters which he receives from his friends. Being neither a blockhead nor conceited, you will take due interest in all that pertains to this saintly sufferer; yet there are blockheads, namely conceited ones, that will say, "What do the public care for his stockings, or for his oysters, or for the cake that came in its native pan, or the heartless hens who refused to lay

* "Private Correspondence of Cowper," 2 vols.

eggs to make another cake?" I would have such persons to know that a Cowper, moving in the light of his mental beauty and modest sanctity, irradiates every object that is in contact with him: it is *their* oysters and cakes that are insignificant, because they are so themselves. I wish I knew what kind of garters he wore; how proud and happy I should have been to knit a pair for him: I should have hung up the wires, as Cervantes did his pen, considering them hallowed ever afterwards.

People say that these letters should not have been published, because his mental malady, which was the weakness of his faith, appears here without disguise. This morbid humility was tinged with his constitutional gloom: but can any one doubt that He who guided him with his counsel while here, did not thereafter receive him into glory?. and shall those trembling spirits, with whom perfect love has not cast out fear, derive no consolation from knowing that the sensible perception of the Divine power was withheld from one to whom so many beatitudes apply, such as, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." — "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Does *he* not see God; and is he not comforted? Can any thing be imagined more rapturous than the bright morning of salvation rising on his long dark night? "Great is the mystery of godliness;" but to him it is no longer a mystery, as far as relates to his own case. Amiable in his infirmities, delightful in his playfulness, respectable in his abilities, blending the finished gentleman, the heart-felt poet, and the humble saint in the happiest

union, — we are here drawn into a closer intimacy with that matchless and spotless mind, that has so long commanded our smiles and tears, while we know not whether most to admire or pity him.

I would, if I could, say much of the pleasant state of my present family; but I must reserve that and various other things for a long letter to Mrs. Brown. Do you ask me what I think of the Islay Campbells? I had a mere glimpse of them; and then my attention was so fixed on an ethereal-looking creature called Emma, that I retain no trace of the other two. Adieu, in haste, my very dear old friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXVI.

TO MRS. GORMAN, BAGOT STREET, DUBLIN.

Edinburgh, 15th April, 1824.

My dear Mrs. Gorman,

I am so distressed by the intelligence* conveyed to us in the last Irish newspaper, (of which alas, I cannot for a moment doubt,) that I think the event must have been dreadfully sudden, or I should have heard of it otherwise.

What, my dear bereaved friend, shall I say to you? How shall I give you the benefit of my experience? With me the blow was very sudden, yet ought not to have been unexpected, as a gradual decay of Mr.

* The death of the Rev. Mr. Gorman.

Grant's health and spirits were the too visible prelude to it. I cannot tell you any thing on the subject of resignation to the will of the Almighty, or of his love being made manifest in the chastisements which he inflicts on his children, that you do not know already; I can only tell you how my unextinguishable sorrow was soothed while the infliction lasted. I took my son, or, I should rather say, he was given to me by the kind faithful people about me, into my bosom, he being then but eighteen months old. In bed, but sleepless, the first night, a young person read aloud to me the Psalms, relieved by another, the whole night. I can scarcely say that I was impressed with the substance of what I heard, but I caught a sentence now and then; and the very monotonous sound lulled me at last to brief and startling slumber.

I tell you this, because I have nothing else to tell you but what the sympathy of numerous friends, the good sense and piety of your own mind, and, above all, the consolations contained in the Word of Life, will suggest to you. I cannot say to a bleeding heart, "Bleed no longer," any more than I could say to an inundation, "Retire within your banks." To such as you and myself, one great consolation is, that the scene around us is soon about to vanish from before us; the doors of immortality will soon open, and disclose objects that are in mercy and in wisdom now concealed from us. We have been long invited to knock, and it shall be opened, — long assured, that if we seek we shall find; and, surely, never is the mind so prepared to knock for admittance as when

the objects we most delighted in are hid from our eyes,—never so ready to seek after the things that belong to our peace as when the dearest ties that held us to this world are suddenly broken. When pierced by the sharpest sorrows, we ought to think most deeply of Him who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, upon whom our burden was laid, and who is able and willing to bear it.

Your strokes follow heavy and fast, and yet, compared with me, you are but a novice in affliction. —Every new calamity, however, where it does not harden the mind, humbles it, and makes it more patient to endure: as long as we think that earth has new delights we cling to it, and regard every privation as if something that was actually our own had been taken from us. We are like unfeeling and ungrateful debtors, who are full of discontent and resentment when the best of our benefactors reclaims his own, after long indulgence: but we learn in the school of affliction how to bow our necks to the yoke, and yield up with humility what we have only in trust till demanded by the owner.

Pray let some one write a few lines to let me know how your health holds out, and some circumstances of the painful past. We are all well. With love to dear Catherine, I am, with the truest sympathy, dear Mrs. Gorman, yours affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXVII.

TO MRS. BROWN, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, 13th May, 1824.

My dear Friend,

For I think I may well call you so now, though friendship, like an aloe, bloomed only once a century. Fifty years it is since we knew and liked each other; and whatever time and changes may have added, I think they have taken nothing away. Your sister's* rights of primogeniture have been long established; and when I write to her I consider you as included, though now and then a slight sensation of modesty passes over my mind, whispering that it is possible, barely possible, that she does not think my letters contain matter of sufficient interest to be shown to you, and that, therefore, I should write to you myself. Accordingly, I hereby congratulate you on your West Indian grand-daughter, whose existence the newspaper announced to me, and on the Irish niece, for such I think she is, that you are about to have.

Of the little writing time which my present large family and too numerous acquaintance allows, I find it in a manner necessary to give much to Miss L., who lives a life of melancholy seclusion, and often of acute suffering. She so earnestly entreats me to write much and often, and seems so much soothed and interested by my letters, that I only regret I have no more time to devote to her in these hours of desolation. The deep feeling she had of the worth

* Mrs. Smith.

and excellence of my dear Isabella, and the manner in which she sympathised with us at the time she was taken from us, has added much to the affection we have long had for her. She always meant and wished to be pious; and certainly, as regarded her fellow-creatures, had a conscience void of offence. Unhappily, for her and many others, there is in her neighbourhood a set of separatists from the Church, whose practice, it would appear, in many instances did no honour to their profession: they were described as in the worst sense worldly-minded and full of spiritual pride; in short, the prejudice against them was so strong, that the reproach of their real or imputed hypocrisy threw discredit on the sound and vital part of the doctrine they professed. Every thing approaching to Calvinism, even that of the ancient and genuine English church, was involved in that reproach. It was a subject on which we were so likely to disagree, that for some time it was rarely touched; but of late I hear so many instances of changes almost miraculous, (that of Mrs. G., for instance,) that I should not wonder though my friend Jane should see things in a very different light from what she has done hitherto.

I am encouraged to hope this from her last letter, which is full of the praises of a person whose opinions she would once have held very cheap, and whom she wishes me to introduce to your son Robert. This is a Dr. Leo, a very sensible and truly pious man, whom she would once have thought the wildest enthusiast. He is actuated by the warmest zeal for enlarging the kingdom of the Redeemer upon earth,

but appears to be calm and rational in his views: he was chaplain to that most interesting regiment, the Duke of Brunswick's Black Hussars, who always wore mourning for the former duke, who was killed in battle, and continued it for the last, who fell in the same cause afterwards. Dr. L. came with the allies into France, and spent much time doing his Master's work there, and had considerable success; he will himself explain to you his plan for doing good in Vienna,—I should only anticipate him: he is much revered among serious people here and in England. Adieu, dear old friend. Believe me yours, affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXVIII.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 23d June, 1824.

My dear Friend,

The long-cherished hope of seeing you here, in person, I have been forced to resign; many obstacles have occurred, and some that I now think unconquerable. I grieve to hear that the Archdeacon recovers so slowly: the month you passed at Winchester must have gone by heavily, I am happy to find, however, that your brother Sir Robert, and his lady, have made you so much at home, and that you have both benefited here. Nothing does so much good to the lingering convalescent as the cordial of kindness from those

they love, and society without bustle or exertion. I trust the worst is over with you both. . . . . .

Now to speak of books. There is a lady here whom I think you must know, — Miss Ferrier; her father is a very old man, and she, who is not very young, and has indifferent health, secludes herself almost entirely with him. The fruits of this seclusion appeared three or four years since in the form of a novel called Marriage: it was evidently the production of a clever, caustic mind, with much good painting of character in it, that could not be produced without talent and considerable knowledge of men and books. I have just finished a hasty perusal of a new work by the same author, called the Inheritance, and join the general voice in pronouncing it clever, though there is, perhaps, too much of caricature throughout. Pray read it; there is strong sense in it, and it keeps attention awake even when it does not entirely please. There are some here who praise this book beyond measure, and even hold it up as excelling the invisible charmer. This leads me to Redgauntlet, where Walter is himself again. Who says that his *forte* is low characters? I do not meet in books, and very rarely in life, such gentlemen as his, with sentiments so just, so manly, and so happily expressed. Witness the feeling without weakness or painted sentimentality, the dignity without strut or false elevation, the graceful ease and unbending spirit displayed in the painful interview betwixt the infatuated Chevalier and his adherents.

Basil Hall's Letters on South America I have read with pleasure, and hope, nay believe, the information

they contain is genuine; yet he sometimes reminds me of the Clown's address to Malvolio, when he supposes him possessed: "Out upon thee, foul fiend; speakest thou of nought but ladies?" I have met with Basil Hall, and was never more surprised. I looked for a bold weather-beaten tar, but I found a gentleman, with a soft voice and soft manners, pouring out small-talk in half whispers to ladies; I believe, however, he is very estimable. Two volumes of Ariosto Rose's Recollections of Italy have lately amused me much. He is acute, elegant, and refined to fastidiousness; but some allowance must be made for a young man nursed in purple and fine linen, and fed with Greek and Roman classics, and born to smart and agonize at every pore, from being the hapless owner of a sickly and sensitive frame.

Are there any more new books to talk of, or can we close this talk of literature without remembering one who has pleased us more than we ought to be pleased, and shocked us less than we ought to have been shocked? It is with this feeling that I thought of Byron, when the fashionable world were full of admiration of his gloomy heroes with one virtue and a thousand crimes. I think I felt his powers as deeply as those who talked loudest in their praise; but, then my conscience never slept; indeed, my moral taste would have revolted at the guilty gloom that hung over his heroes, though I had no higher principle to direct me. Of Byron's death I like neither to speak nor hear. What a fall was his before the scene closed! At the time that I speak thus, I am in a great measure a stranger to the works that

disgraced his last years. I have said more to you than I intended of one whom I seldom mention to others, yet often have I lamented over this "fallen cherub."

I am glad Theodore Hook finds literature so profitable. His songs (for I will think them his) in "John Bull" used to divert me not a little. Perhaps it is too high a compliment, but when I hear of his being in confinement, I think of Prince Henry saying of Sir Walter Raleigh, that none but his father would keep such a bird in a cage. Remember me with warm regard to the Archdeacon, and believe me, with the truest affection and sympathy, yours ever,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXIX.

TO MRS. SMITH, MEADOWSIDE, NEAR GLASGOW.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 28th June, 1824.

It would be very politic in you not to write to me at this time, that I might be discouraged from coming, as I first intended, with my page to quarter upon you. If you had such an intention, which I do not suspect you of, it would be disappointed, for I actually propose going west about the end of next week. I shall certainly very much miss poor Bess Scott's kindly solicitude when I come. I feel a quick pang at the thought that I shall see her no more in this

world; I always felt grateful for her unwearied kindness. Poor affectionate Maxwell Pagan too! But what had she to attach her to life? Yet she, infirm and feeble as she was, had her plans, and hopes, and wishes.

You are not the only person who has relinquished a fine house for one less fine. I had a letter from Mrs. Rucker two or three days since. The great affair of selling Melrose Hall*, their magnificent house near London, is settled at last; they have got —— thousand pounds for it from the Marquis of Stafford, and have dismissed thirty servants: this last, Mrs. Rucker says, was the most painful part of the business. What a source of charity is dried up in one quarter; what a door of liberal hospitality closed! A stately pair will succeed, who will pass only a small part of the year there, as this will be only one of many residences.

I think I must now tell you of a pious and excellent lady, who, after a long journey through the dark vale of adversity, has, in the serious period of life, arrived at rank and dignity, on which she sets no other value than as it may please her many friends, and make her example more conspicuous and impressive. Miss Erskine, of Marr, now Lady Frances Erskine, the estimable person in question, has tasted as deeply of the cup of sorrow as any one you know, though you know me. My acquaintance with her commenced when I had her niece under my care, many years ago; she has ever since shown me every tes-

* Now West Hill, near Putney.

timony of regard in her power. But I must now tell you of her afflictions.

* * * * * * *

Meanwhile Lady Frances pursued calmly and humbly the path of duty: meek and resigned, she quietly and steadily devoted herself to works of charity and piety, and, above all, to her worthy father, whose comfort and support she has ever been. Even in this world she had her reward, in a degree of public esteem seldom given to such a quiet and unobtrusive character. I hasten to tell that the restored title came like a beam to gild the evening of existence, and that it arrived on the old Earl's birthday, when he had finished his eighty-third year.* Now, I congratulated the family in writing, as I could not call like other friends; and Lady Frances came the next day to acknowledge, &c. The night before last I went by appointment to drink tea with my immediate neighbour, Mrs. Keith, of Ravelstone, and there met Lord Nairn, another of the newly-restored peers, and his lady, who is Mrs. Keith's sister. It so happens that every one of the restored peers are excellent characters, — so every one is glad.

Be sure to invite me to come and see you, for I think my last visit to you must have some forms: it is now half a century since my first. I will check the many reflections that suggest themselves, and end with telling you that I am, as I have ever been, very much yours,

ANNE GRANT.

* The title of Earl of Marr, which had been forfeited after the rebellion of 1715, was, with several other titles, restored by King George the Fourth in 1824.

LETTER CCLXXX.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, The Fairlie, 8th August, 1824.

I write to say that nothing could be more prosperous than our journey, or more pleasant than the conclusion of it. I am so glad that I came here, and so sorry that I have so short a time to contemplate so much beauty, both in the everlasting hills, which change not, and the ever-moving waters, grand and beautiful in their variety.

But why should I speak of what you know so well, when I have so much to tell that you do not know? But I should tell you first what a privilege I think it, even for a short space, to breathe this atmosphere of sanctity and peace. Well, I shall leave your son to tell of our outsetting. When we looked for nothing but continued rain, at Greenock the sun began to look out upon us, which was very civil in him, considering how frugal he is of his beams in that moist region; from thence to Inverkip it was all nature, freshness, and simplicity. There we stopped at your brother Andrew's door, where a whole group of old friends came out, and treated us with cordial smiles of welcome, and a large basket of gooseberries,—very acceptable fellow-travellers; but they all vanished before we reached the end of our journey.

At Largs, the kindness with which we were received by your sister was really affecting: we arrived in the very crisis of a splendid marine sunset. Next

day I rose by mistake a little after five, yet did not return to bed, but communed with my old inconstant friend the Sea, and the Rev. Mr. Whitfield, till breakfast, making up in the mean time a great intimacy with the happy-looking, well-managed children. After breakfast came an invitation for Rosa Ilderton, to join a party to some place in Bute: they set out, accompanied by an indispensable provision-basket, and did not return till late, tired, yet full of the adventures of the day. I should have mentioned, that Lady Isabella Boyle called to see me, and kindly invited me to dine, on Tuesday, at Kelburn. I have also received a letter from Lady John Campbell*, about my coming to visit her at Ardincaple: but she little knows the difficulty I have in moving, or the necessity which others find of submitting to the tyranny of circumstances over which she has hitherto held despotic sway. I am enjoying, here, the place, the people, and the tranquillity very much; it is indeed, like the primitive Eden, as Milton tells us,—

> . . . . . "able to chase
> All sadness but despair."

And my sadness is not despair; it does not die, but it often sleeps. I am ever, dear friend, yours beyond all profession,

ANNE GRANT.

* Formerly Miss Glassell of Long Niddry, frequently mentioned in these letters.

Letter CCLXXXI.

TO DR. FRANCIS BOOTT*, FORT AUGUSTUS, INVERNESS-SHIRE.

Edinburgh, 19th August, 1824.

My dear Sir,

Last night I returned here, and found every one very well. I was provoked at the cross purposes that kept us from meeting when your party were at Glasgow. We might have contrived to see you, had you but sent to Meadow-side instead of Jordan-hill; or had you come to the Fairlie, that most delectable of retirements, where I could have shown you so much beauty, scenic, moral and intellectual, in my own little sphere of friendship; and then, Lord Glasgow's unequalled Kelburn, with all its sylvan charms and baronial dignity, and the mild virtues of its kind inhabitants. And you should have seen the remains (not small remains either) of the Castle, where halls of hospitality were open in the days of Hardyknute; where—

* Dr. Francis Boott, of Boston, America, now of Gower Street, London, the friend to whom this letter is addressed, was then engaged in a tour through the Highlands, accompanied by Mrs. Boott, and some relatives from America. This gentleman has given the world an interesting proof of his admiration of genius. In Mr. Southey's Life of Henry Kirke White, he says, "A tablet to Henry's memory, with a medallion by Chantrey, has been placed in All Saints' Church, Cambridge, at the expense of a young American gentleman, Mr. Francis Boott, of Boston. During his travels in this country, he visited the grave of one whom he had learned to love and regret in America, and finding no other memorial of him than the initials of his name upon the plain stone which covers his perishable remains, ordered this monument to be erected." It bears a suitable inscription from the pen of Professor Smyth, of Cambridge.

" Stately stept he east the wa',
And stately stept he west;
Full seventy years he now had seen,
Wi' scarce seven years of rest."

But unless you had some previous acquaintance with my favourite hero, with all his valour, courtesy, and generosity, you would look with little interest on the abode of his "peerless dame," and his "Fairlie fair," from whom not only the Castle, but all that part of the Ayrshire coast, takes its name. And you should have seen the dear old friends with whom I passed that winged week, that I shall always think of as too short. What added to its interest, though it broke in upon its tranquillity, was, that a whole cluster of the companions of my early youth were at Largs, and came daily to see me, full of fresh remembrances, as if we had parted last year. How far these pleasures were mingled with pain I will not say; but that they were the wholesomer for that mixture, there is no room to doubt.

Will you think me a little foolish, when I express a wish that, if you have a good day to explore the walks round my long-loved Fort Augustus, you would go up to the house of Culachy, at the foot of Corryarick, and call to give my regards to a poor afflicted widow, Mrs. Oliver, a kinswoman of mine, who lives there. Tell her I asked her to direct you to a little fall of water, about half a mile above the house, which dashes down the face of a rock into a little round basin,—so dear to many of my tenderest recollections that I shall like you the better for having washed your hands in it; and if you should walk a little further up that glen, depend on it my

spirit will walk with you, and you will perhaps meet my wraith. A wraith, you must know, is the shadowy likeness of an absent living person: now I think I am as likely to be one, and you as likely to see one, as can be imagined of any visionaries, neither very young nor in love.

Will you think me encroaching, if I also request that you would walk to the back of the rocks at the other side of Loch Ness, towards Inchnacardoch. Three sister-burns descend there from the hills to the north, and in the middle one there is such a grotto! But you could never find it by this vague description. What an old fool, to be talking of a grotto when she should be thinking of a grave! This would be the remark of nine in ten: but *you* will say, how merciful that a pilgrim, travelling through such a rugged path, should for a moment forget her bleeding feet while recalling the pleasing though innocent past, or exploring with tremulous hope the invisible future. This you will say, and your Mary will say Amen.

There is no coming at once down to dull earth and the ignorant present after all this; but it assorts well enough with an aerial flight, to come down from one's balloon, and thank those that were anxious and kind in their inquiries after one's excursion. Such were your friends; and therefore to your respected mother, to my old acquaintance Mr. Brooke, and my new acquaintance, his interesting and, I should, suppose, amiable wife, commend me most kindly; and doubt not that I am, with much esteem and warm regard, dear sir, yours truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXXII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 7th September, 1824.

All hurried as you were, I think your last letter truly meritorious, and your unceasing attention to me more so. In regard to diminishing the weight of care, I have greatly the advantage of you, for I have Mary, who is every thing to me. That is well; for I find that, without such a prop, I should soon grow useless. Of this I had a proof the very last week: Miss Lyman, an American lady who resides with me, had the strongest desire to see Loch Katrine and the Trosachs, and so had a good old friend of ours, Mrs. Millar. But this party could not hold without Mary, who was extremely unwilling to leave me. However, there was a person, of whom you have possibly heard, by the name of Miss Bannerman*, who lives now a feeble invalid at Portobello; but with all this external decay, her shattered frame is illuminated by a mind bright with genius and rich in stores of intelligence. This most companionable shadow was left with me till the tourists should return; and while she did stay she was invaluable. Her style of conversation is so pure, her train of thinking so elevated, her piety so scriptural, so supporting: you see her setting in mild brightness, the too fervid energy of her mind now softened down by the sober certainty of her distinct, yet humble, views of the futurity which seems glow-

* Author of a volume of poems, published at Edinburgh in 1800.

ing before her. But Miss Bannerman, to do her justice, with all her lights and shades (increasing lights and diminishing shades), would require a letter for the sole purpose of giving you some idea of what she is. I shall therefore only tell you that her intercourse with me proved by no means a *tête-à-tête*, for we had many visiters, all, or for the most part, tourists; and your coffee stood me in good stead, and so did sundry boxes of game that followed each other in quick succession.

I was a good deal worn out with all this, and by the excitement attending the final departure from Edinburgh of our friends Dr. and Mrs. Boott, certainly the most agreeable set of people to be met with in this age of fac-similes. Never were such enthusiasts: what others feign they truly feel.* They went some weeks ago on a tour to the Highlands, including the parish of Laggan. Improvement, busy every where, has been particularly so there; —

> "And still the fresh spring finds
> New groves to thicken, and new plants to green."

You would not know it, if you saw it now, with all its sylvan decorations. Mrs. Boott has made very pretty, and, what is better, very accurate drawings of our church, our family tomb, and its surrounding trees, and of Fort Augustus, ever dear to memory. It is delightful to meet people not worldly wise or prematurely old; yet the simplicity of their habits, their total indifference about emulating the wealth and finery of others, stands in the place of

* See note subjoined to Letter of 19th August, 1824.

anxious care and foresight, and prevents their overstepping the limits assigned to them.

I hope Mrs. Maccall's summer campaign is over; I am sure she must have been worn out with her Gallicized visiters. When I hear of people going abroad to reside, it sounds to me like going into purgatory: to those who prefer a Parisian residence, I think it is fool's paradise at best. Adieu, dear friend: the current of thought has been turned another way, and I wonder at my own barbarity; so do you, I suppose. No more at present from

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXXIII.

TO MRS. HOOK, THE CLOSE, WINCHESTER.

Edinburgh, 22d November, 1824.

My dear Friend,

Believe that I am not only highly pleased with your useful and elegant present, but not a little proud of it; and if I have been faulty in delaying to express my gratitude, it was because I have ever since been groaning under a load of unanswered letters, and latterly under a cold caught when our venerable old town was burning.

Now, whether shall I speak of books or of fire —both at present fertile subjects? I think I shall despatch the fire first. Lord Byron will not be *deader* than he is, and his historians will not be more treacherous and scandalous a month hence; Theodore

Hook's "Sayings and Doings" will not be less clever, or less abrupt; Miss Ferrier will not be less observing or sagacious; nor will the matchless Scott's worst be less superior to the best of other writing creatures. But as for the voracious fire,—it still lives in its ashes, still smokes in spite of two days' constant rain, and still haunts my imagination; and still a voice of woe seems to proclaim that the glory of old Edinburgh is departed. I should but encroach on the newspapers by telling you, in detail, the story of this calamity, and shall therefore speak only of my own feelings. Spending an evening last week at a friend's house, I heard that there was a fire in the Old Town; but fires in Edinburgh are usually soon extinguished, and I had no idea of its extent. My friends lived far to the west, so that we heard little there of what was going on. Every creature ran to the scene of action, so that, when I returned at ten to my house opposite to the Castle, the street was quite empty; every one that could walk went to the Old Town, and none returned. The fire had proceeded along the south side of the High Street, driven eastward by a tempest from the west, till at length the steeple of the Tron Church had fallen in. The large bell was melted with excessive heat; and the volumes of smoke and glowing skies wore all the appearance of a volcano discharging its contents. But this was only a prelude to more extended horrors. At the very time that this was going on, a house in the Parliament Square took fire in the garret, that is to say, the eighth story, and was not overcome until a great part of the square was reduced to ashes.

I hardly think there was any one that lamented more than myself the destruction of the venerable buildings of the Old Town. It was not the old wine, old rum, and old papers in the various public offices that I lamented; it was the grand lofty towers of building, that bore witness to the spirit and exertion of our poor country, at a period when great part of London was built of wood. I assure you I exulted not a little in its sombre dignity; and its destruction was no small wound to my national vanity. You know too little of the topograghy of our stately old city to comprehend what we have lost, that can never be restored. Must I confess that my mind was so full of this dreary chasm, opening in the locality hallowed by so many lofty associations, that my heart did not, for the time, respond to the voice of wretchedness arising from the homeless poor? But they are children of a day, whose losses are reparable: this is not the case with those dwellings built for ages, that can never be restored. The poor, of whom a great number inhabited the high stories and cellars of the great piles of building, that have sunk in the common ruin, lose little by all this; they have all been lodged in Queensberry House, near Holyrood; quantities of clothes and food have been poured in from all quarters, and nearly five thousand pounds have already been subscribed for their benefit. In short, all that class will probably be better off than they were before this calamity. I beg you will give our united love to dear Eliza; and believe me, ever your affectionately attached,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXXIV.

TO MRS. BROWN.

Edinburgh, 17th December, 1824.

My dear Mrs. Brown,

Thank you for your kind concern about my indispensable butter; but this year you will escape not only the trouble of purchasing it, but all further solicitude about its merits, as I have got a supply of this commodity myself from the most unlikely place possible. I used to be so eloquent in the description of Caithness, which left an impression on my fancy from being unlike every other place, that I think I must have described it to you. In case I may not have done so, you are to know, that that country (a pretty wide one) is, with a few exceptions, as flat as your floor, with an iron-bound coast, rocky and precipitous beyond imagination, on which the German Ocean in all its fury has beat, I suppose, since the deluge. We hear in poetry of waves in vain assailing rocks that repel their useless rage: not so the sea-beat rocks of Caithness. The tempests of other times have there left strange vestiges of their turbulence; by turns, fantastic and sublime, they bear the forms of ruined castles, lofty towers, &c.; and in some places one sees a rude circular aperture, through which the sea has rushed in like a cataract. This terrific barrier served to repel the Danish invaders; and wherever the descent of even a large burn found its way to the sea, a real castle was built to defend the opening: so that there could not be a greater contrast than the

flat, unvaried tameness of the interior, where neither tree nor bush was seen, and the bold magnificence of the shore. There was also a great want of verdure: where this flat plain, which after all is a fertile one, was not covered with oats or barley, its produce was only the shortest, dryest heather possible. When travelling in that country, a few years ago, I began, despairing of shade, to long for verdure, and to wonder where the cows fed; for my farming propensities stick to me still. About the thriving and populous town of Wick my eyes were refreshed by green fields, for the first time; and I think it was further on, or when proceeding from John O'Groat's House to Thurso, that I saw betwixt me and the sea something like a glen, running among low hills, where a few stunted trees were trying to grow. I was told by a native, with some exultation, that Sheriff Traill lived there, who was a great improver, had planted trees, *and had a dairy*. Now, that I should, this year, get my butter from the only dairy in Caithness, from the earthly paradise of Sheriff Traill, seems wonderful; but so it is. You are not, however, to suppose the inhabitants of this bleak domain deficient in *amor patriæ*, far otherwise:—

> "What happier natures shrink at with affright,
> The hard inhabitants contend is right."

Now I think we are both tired, and may revert to something more interesting, after having established my character as an intelligent traveller and relieved you for one year of the trouble of procuring butter for me.

I sincerely congratulate you on your son William's

recovery: you have indeed, on this and all other occasions, been mercifully dealt with, and, what is still better, have, I am sure, a deep and grateful sense of those mercies. I often think of you and the peaceful pious habits of your family, and consider you all as the happiest people I know. I shall long cherish the memory of the days I spent with you last summer in Ayrshire, as one of the very few periods of my life that I can look back on without a shade of regret.

Our friend Mrs. Rucker, the generous, the pious, and the truly amiable, has had her troubles,—those shadows in a life of bright prosperity that abate its dangerous effulgence. Very lately she has lost a niece, whom she adopted and considered as a daughter, and on whose mind she had taken great pains. The latter showed a most desirable frame of mind, and the faith and hope that disarm death of its terrors.

You cannot think how we have been shocked and distressed by the death of Mrs. Wilson: she was in mind, in person, and in action, the youngest person of her age I ever saw. What a loud call is this to me: she was so much younger, so truly and extensively useful.

I enclose a letter from a lady to a very poor woman; pray *send* it to the address: a penny is something to her. Now, with most affectionate regards to you all, including little Annie, if she has left off crying at her porridge, I am, very truly, my dear old friend, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXXV.

TO THE REV. DR. HOOK, THE CLOSE, WINCHESTER.

My dear Sir, Edinburgh, 23d December, 1824.

I lose no time in expressing my gratitude for your kindness in giving me the intelligence of dear Mrs. Hook, contained in your very kind letter. I should indeed have been greatly shocked and afflicted had I heard an uncertain rumour about this alarming illness, which would have left me to dread the worst result. But, from your account of it, I conclude that the disorder, though sudden and violent, has, with God's blessing, yielded to the remedies prescribed, leaving only a degree of weakness remaining, which, I trust, good advice and the united cares of yourself and Georgiana will soon remove. Alas! I can but ill afford to lose any of my few remaining comforts; and though your dear friend and mine were in Greece, or any more distant land, where I might not have even a hope of ever seeing her again, I should feel a blank in the evening of my existence if I could not think of her, as I always do, as an unworldly being, loving, sweetening, and brightening life, to all that hold her by the heart-strings. You and she would have more than your reasonable share of the chequered felicity which this state of being affords, if you were not made thus to tremble for each other, in order to strengthen, if that were possible, your affection, and to enhance and exalt your gratitude to the fountain of every pure and hallowed blessing.

I hope this will find you all in Winchester with Lady Charlotte; her friend and mine will recover the sooner for being absent for a time from the petty cares of home. She will be as well attended as that mirror of chivalrous courtesy, Hardyknute, intended that his wounded knight should be:—

> "Sir Knight, gin ye were in my bower,
> To lean on silken seat,
> My lady's kindly care you'd prove,
> Wha ne'er kent deadly hate:
> Hersell wad watch ye a' the day,
> Her maids at dead of night,
> And Fairlie fair your heart wad cheer,
> As she stands in your sight."

Now I think all this is most likely to happen to your beloved, with a small alteration:—

> "And *Charlotte* fair her heart will cheer,
> As she stands in her sight."

Have the goodness to recall me to that fair lady's memory, and tell her I have for some time past seen many branches of her family.

I should say, in excuse for my excursion about Hardyknute, that he and his whole history, so dear to my young imagination, were called up from the long slumber of forty years, by lately seeing in Ayrshire the remains of his castle,—no longer with "halls and towers a' hicht," but still a respectable ruin.

When you come, as I hope you will some time or other, to Edinburgh, you can hardly be surprised by the New Town, as our nationality, is always giving glowing descriptions; but I imagine you to be so far infected with Scotch nationality, that you will join me in mourning over the ruined grandeur of the Old

Town, whose lofty antiquity you must remember. The late fire has destroyed some of its noblest features. I shall now conclude by telling you that the small remains of my family are well; and begging that you, or Georgiana, will write a few lines to say how my dear friend's recovery proceeds, with my affectionate love to her, I am, dear sir, with much esteem, yours, very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXXVI.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 26th December, 1824.

When I have nothing of particular interest to communicate I cannot help thinking my letters must be like dry leaves from a withering tree. Were this decaying plant refreshed, like some others, by dews from above, it might be otherwise. But, alas!—yet such is people's taste for any thing that grows scarce, that I have at this moment a load of unanswered letters beside me, earnestly demanding answers, which, when received, will merely show the poverty of the intellectual exchequer. I have one from your friend Miss R., who, to recur to the image of withered leaves, seems to be tossed about very like one. She is now near London, on a visit to Mrs. Barbauld, the only one of that Unitarian sanhedrim for whom I have much respect or esteem.

My ideas have been so completely ignited by the

recent calamity, that, like Malvolio's fiend, who talked of nought but ladies, I should talk of nought but fire, if I once touched on that terrific subject. I shall at present rather speak of our American friend Mrs. Hall. Far from entering into her enthusiasm in regard to La Fayette, I am provoked beyond measure at seeing all this idolatry bestowed on the old coxcomb, when the same people showed more than heartless indifference to the catastrophe of his master, to whom they owed the aid of which Lafayette was merely the minister,—aid so fatal to that just and merciful prince, whose blood the regicides so deeply avenged upon each other. I never did admire the American Gallomania, which, I think, setting moral considerations aside, is the parent of the bad taste that appears in many of their writings.

I have possibly made some mistakes in speaking of the justly-revered Bishop Leighton, very many years having passed since I read Burnet's account of him. You are not to suppose that the admiration of posterity alone was attracted by his merits. When he was one day lost in meditation in his own sequestered walk at Dunblane, a widow, younger and fairer than you or I, came up to him and told him that it was ordered that he should marry her, for that she had dreamed three times that she was married to him. The Bishop answered, Very well, whenever he should dream thrice that he was married to her, he should let her know, and then the union would take place. I don't know if this is told in his Memoirs; but it would be a pity to let this solitary specimen of grave pleasantry sleep in oblivion.

There was a lady with us, last night, who spent

some time with Mrs. S. in England, last spring. You are no stranger to Mrs. S. having taken a very pious turn some years since. She is a pure-minded and warm-hearted creature; but not having much early cultivation of mind, and a temper somewhat rash and enthusiastic, she plunged with a kind of blind zeal into the depths of polemical divinity, was quite shocked at every one who was not equally zealous, and showed an undue anxiety to know about the time and manner of every one's conversion, &c.; in short, she did not altogether seem to worship in the beauty of holiness. She had never known what it was to be restricted in any thing; and piety, with her, took rather the form of a passion agitating and engrossing the mind, than of a sentiment warming and purifying the heart. Mark, however, the real fruits of piety, when this rash ebullition subsided. My friend says it was perfectly delightful to see the deportment of the family, the last time she visited Mrs. S.; there was such a sweet serenity among them, like those possessed of that peace which passeth understanding. Their pious exercises are as frequent as ever, and the spirit of devotion seems to prevail as much in all they say and do; they have renounced gay amusements themselves, but no longer rail at those who share them, nor speak harshly of those who differ in points of doctrine; and altogether there is a more truly Christian spirit prevailing among them. You cannot think what pleasure all this gave me; for I love Mrs. S. much, and think that her mind is now better regulated, and that she has tasted the fruits of righteousness, which are peace.

I am very much concerned to hear of poor Mary

Scott's sufferings; and yet how short and inconsiderable will all this misery be to a happy spirit escaped from the prison of mortality! What a blessing has that sainted creature, Jenny Scott, been, not merely to her relatives, but to all her suffering friends. I always looked up to her with the utmost veneration. Remember me affectionately to Mrs. Brown; and believe me, my dear friend, yours always,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXXVII.

TO MRS. HOOK, WHIPPINGHAM RECTORY, ISLE OF WIGHT.

Edinburgh,
23d February, 1825.

My dear, very dear Friend,

The alarm communicated by Dr. Hook's letter waked so many fears for the present and recollections of the past, that I felt as if I had never before known how dear you were to me. Heavy, heavy, have been my losses, both in my own family and of valuable friends; and I naturally clasp closer to my heart those that remain. None but real friends have sympathy to give that is worth accepting; and to those, instead of complaining, I would rather administer comfort, by telling them how I have been supported with unbroken health, and, what is still better, unbroken hope, through this last severe trial and threatened calamity. You might well wonder not to hear from

me all this time, and that I had seemed to neglect your request about the poems. Know, then, that my precious, my only daughter, my invaluable Mary, has been now above seven weeks confined with a severe fever, which, for ten days, was most alarming; and I think I was then the only one about her that hoped against hope. For a fortnight past she has taken nourishment in small quantities, and now sits up an hour or more in the day; in short, I have much cause to thank God that she is out of danger, and is, I trust, in the fair way towards recovery.

Now that my alarm has subsided, I shall have more tranquillity, and shall have my little book filled, and, I think, sent off to you, next week, by a gentleman who proposes to visit you at your home, or wherever you happen to be when he arrives. Who should this be but my own son, who is going on some business to London, and will deliver the packet into your own hand. I shall write to you by him again. Meantime believe me, most truly and most affectionately, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXXVIII.

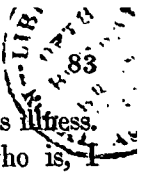
TO MRS. GORMAN, DUBLIN.

My dear Mrs. Gorman, Edinburgh, 23d March, 1825.

The last winter was to me such a chaos of disastrous recollections, that I cannot positively affirm what I have done or neglected; but there is a strong impression on my mind that I wrote to you soon after hearing of the addition to your happiness in the marriage of your son. But you must make allowance for a state of mind occasioned by my daughter's illness, that, far from admitting of my answering many kind letters from distant friends too long neglected, put it out of my power, from utter inability, to answer even a note of inquiry. I am thankful to say that a degree of feebleness and depression is all that now remains of her complaint, and that is daily wearing away.

My son, whom you so kindly inquire after, is at present in London, whither he went last week, on business not exactly his own. He has written two very interesting letters to me from Lindisfarn, otherwise the Holy Isle, where the vessel, in which he was a passenger, was obliged by stress of weather to remain for two days, the first of which he spent in viewing its sacred edifices, with which he seemed much interested, and the next was detained by the continued tempest. . . . . .

Unhappy Maturin,—what a life was his! Of his death I fear to ask. What makes me more particularly think of him just now is a drawing in chalk



that I saw of him immediately before Mary's illness. A young man of the name of Bewick, who is, I think, from Ireland, came to town, wishing to take portraits of people here who were known to the public. The great Well-known, the Arch-critic, and many others sat to him; and when all more worthy subjects were exhausted, he wrote to ask permission to take a likeness of me, and brought all the portraits he had to show me. Those of Maturin and Lady Morgan astonished me, — they were so very like the pictures that existed in my imagination of those worthies. The earnest melancholy look of Maturin, while strongly marked by genius, is like that of one who had not only supped full of horrors, but dined and breakfasted on them: I never saw character more strongly portrayed in a countenance. Lady Morgan, with her wreath of flowers and her self-satisfied smartness, is just the person I had figured to myself. Though by no means approving of some of the opinions in her later publications, yet I admired the ability shown in O'Donnel, the only work of her's that I have ever read through. I am not proud of going about in company with her; and yet the portrait which Bewick drew is by far the best likeness of me existing.

I was gratified by seeing Sir James Macintosh's elegant tribute, in parliament, to your brother's various merits. I know Sir James, whose first wife was as extraordinary a person as himself, — perhaps more so. She seemed to know by intuition all that others are taught with care and expense: she understood and drew out his powers, and was distin-

guished by her clear and sound judgment, "that science fairly worth the seven," for the want of which all the rest cannot compensate.

How proud I am of having written so long a letter: I have been so stupid, I wonder to see myself restored to activity. Adieu, my dear Mrs. Gorman: write soon to your affectionate

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCLXXXIX.

TO MRS. HOOK, WHIPPINGHAM, ISLE OF WIGHT.

Auchendinny, near Edinburgh,
7th May, 1825.

My dear Friend,

I congratulate you, with the most cordial feeling of satisfaction, on the promotion of the new Dean of Worcester *,—though well aware that there are no roses without thorns. Leaving the Isle of Wight, and a partial separation from your much beloved and most deserving Walter, are the drawbacks on this otherwise desirable appointment; for we take it for granted that you will leave Walter in his father's place. But we are all selfish enough to contemplate, with some degree of pleasure, your drawing nearer the bleak North, which you may find, after all, more bracing than your own luxuriant island.

I have now to claim your congratulations on the nearly perfect recovery of Mary. Her physicians

* Dr. Hook was promoted to be Dean of Worcester in 1825.

strongly advised the country, and assured me that exercise in the open air and agreeable society would do more for her than medical skill. Thank God, their prediction has been amply and early verified. Mrs. Fletcher, my admirable friend, lives now in the country entirely: her daughter Margaret, who is Mary's intimate friend, inherits all the worth, and more than the talents, of the family. Mrs. Fletcher never rested till she discovered a suitable, and indeed most comfortable lodging, within a quarter of a mile of her house; and here we are, and have been nearly a month, receiving from that family kindness unbounded and unwearied, such as language cannot do justice to. Miss Fletcher and Mary are much together, driving through the green recesses of the Pentland Hills, or the more beautiful vicinity of Roslin, which is two miles below us. Nothing, indeed, can exceed our own abode on the banks of that same enchanting Esk. Ask Walter Scott, who, in the ballad called the Gray Brother, marks out

> "Auchendinny's hazel glade,
> And haunted Woodhouselee."

This makes but a small part of the classical associations that belong to us, and add interest to the wild sylvan beauty of our unembellished scenery. I wish with all my heart that your Walter saw this place; I am certain it would delight him. We actually have, on each side of the little eminence on which we dwell, glens where "the burnie steals under the lang yellow broom." This last genuine and distinctive feature of true Scottish scenery is abundant here, and now glows around us in full resplendence. This

is chiefly a grazing country; and there are so many high broken braes, the steep boundaries of the Esk, that are, and must ever be, unviolated by the plough, and untortured by the clumsy hands of improvement, that woods, waters, and broomy braes whisper, wave, and bloom in native beauty. But you have much to hear of peopled hamlets, worthy of the scenery that surrounds them, where moral beauty speaks still more eloquently to the heart, than warbling woods and falling waters do to the senses. I shall keep my old castles and apparitions for my next, for you must share not only all that pleases, but all that freezes me here. Accept of love from Mary, and give mine to our ever dear Eliza Farquhar. I am, with warm affection, dear friend, yours, very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXC.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Muckerach, in Strathspey,
23d August, 1825.

My dear Friend,

Your letter found me three days since at Bochrome, which I quitted with great regret, because Mary, I thought, gained a good deal in strength while she was there.* But I will give you a sketch of my proceedings after leaving Aberdeen, from whence I

* Mrs. Grant had this autumn undertaken a tour to the Highlands for the benefit of her daughter's health; a most arduous exertion for Mrs. Grant, who was then, and for the rest of her life, unable to move without the aid of crutches, in consequence of the severe accident of October, 1821.

wrote to you of our safe arrival, having little more to tell. Next day we proceeded through a fertile but treeless country to Huntly, where we were most cordially received by Dr. Maccoll, who is an old and valued acquaintance, and is uncle to my cousin Mary, who was with me all last winter.

Huntly is the residence of the Marquis and Marchioness who bear that title. This pleasant pair surprised me with a call the only day I remained in that thriving and progressing little town. Before leaving it I returned the great Lady's call; and it is but justice, ere I have done with her, to say that she is not only a very amiable, but a very useful and judicious person, pious, charitable, and unwearied in doing good; she is at the same time cheerful, affable, and most attentive to some of her husband's more than motherless nieces that live with her. She exerts a most beneficial influence, not only over the Marquis, but over the widower Duke, more particularly in regard to the appointment of clergymen worthy to be such.

We proceeded, next day, to Bochrome in Banffshire, where we received a welcome the most cordial from a friend who delighted to have it in her power to return what she accounted great obligations to me, in consequence of a kind of charge I took of her and her sisters when they were left orphans. Mrs. Shearer is most happily and respectably married, but has no family; she is an animated, warm-hearted creature; and, after being married for eighteen years, has great remains of beauty, and indeed elegance. When Mr. S. came home, his attentive kindness, if possible, exceeded that of his wife.

My son, who had crossed the mountains by Brae-Mar, came to conduct us up here. This place, though once called by the name of a castle, is merely a comfortable superior farm-house dwelling, under the shadow of an old castle, of which there still exists remains enough to make it a fine object. We are to dine at Castle Grant on Wednesday, Lady Anne Grant having kindly offered to send the carriage for us.

I should fain hope that Mary's recovery will go on progressively, and am most thankful for the length it has come. I hope the mercy which has, through many sufferings, followed me all my life, will not fail me now: but my feelings, so severely called forth by her illness last winter, seem to have shaken my bodily frame not a little. I must now bid you farewell. I am, dear friend, yours, most affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXCI.

TO MISS ANNE DUNBAR, GARROWSTRIPE, NEAR NAIRN.

Muckerach, in Strathspey,
2d October, 1825.

My own dear Bar,

You must, I fear, suppose me very heartless by this time, but in fact I have been in that state that I might say with Job, "Wearisome nights are appointed to me;"—I might well add, no less wearisome days. But the path assigned to me (for my good certainly) is so full of thorns, and I am reluctantly

forced to make so many claims upon the sympathy of my friends, that when a thick cloud hovers over me, I wish to let it diminish or pass by, before I share my sorrows with those who cannot aid me further than with wishes and prayers, which they give unsolicited.

I must tell you now, as you may hear various —perhaps mistaken—accounts of Mary's illness, of its whole process. . . . . .

Mrs. Shearer's seducing kindness prevailed on us to stay in her beautiful and well-regulated place three weeks. We then proceeded to visit Miss Grant, a relation of ours in Strathspey; and Mary seemed to enjoy much the drives, which her brother gave her every day, through the land of her ancestors, where every thing had some interest for her. Contrary to our intention, we staid a fortnight among our Strathspey friends, and then proceeded to Laggan.

I should have mentioned, to make my history more clear, that, in passing through Huntly, the Marchioness* called on me, which call I returned next day on my way to Bochrome, promising to visit her at Kinrara, upon her summons. I thought little about this, as I heard every day of their having crowds of company. However, on Saturday last, when at Laggan, early in the morning, a coroneted carriage drove up to the door; it proved to be sent from Lady Huntly, with a request, contained in a pretty note, that we, that is, Miss Macpherson, of Ralia, Mary, and I, would come down to spend two days with her at Kinrara. As Mary was going on so well with her cousins, I thought it better

* The Marchioness of Huntly, now (1843) Duchess of Gordon.

to leave her where her little invalid habits could be indulged. The visit turned out much more pleasant than I expected: I knew that the Lady of the mansion was good and amiable, but never met with any one who did justice to her attainments or to her intellectual powers. Pretenders, and people who live on borrowed scraps, are so eager to display their little all, that others are led to think that it is impossible to possess much mental wealth without carrying one's purse in one's hand,—consequently never give modest people credit for their stock of hidden treasure. It is not likely I shall ever see the Marchioness of Huntly again, yet I am glad to have known her, and to be able to class her with a set of genuine worthies who inhabit and enrich the *sanctum sanctorum* of my memory.

I was rejoiced to find Miss Grant, Rippachy, at Kinrara, who, though no learned person, is something better; that is, a person always to be depended on, sincere, disinterested, and in friendship most zealous. I knew all this from dear Isabella; and find her opinion confirmed by my experience. One apt to sketch, and moreover, colour, might make chapters with the aid of fancy of the characters we glanced over at Kinrara. The most distinguished were the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, of whom we had merely a glimpse for half an hour: but a descendant of Lady Rachel Russell is always worth looking at; and the Duchess one may look at for herself, she being still very handsome. There were also two young Lady Montagus, who adorned the scene without animating it, for they are inflexibly shy:

their amiable protectress, however, says they have that within which passeth show. After this blaze of rank and beauty, you cannot expect me to say any thing of plain-looking plebeians like myself; and yet such were there.

I should have told you that my son, and Mary, are to join me at the Bridge of Car, where I am just now going, and whence we proceed to Inverness. I rose at daybreak to finish this letter, which I sat up late to begin; it is a mere journal of occurrences. In the mean time, dear Bar, pray earnestly to the Father of mercies, that this cloud may pass over me*, and that the same portion of health and fortitude hitherto given may be continued to me. I am, in haste, but with much affection, dear Bar, yours, most truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXCII.

TO MRS. SMITH, OF JORDANHILL, GLASGOW.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 16th December, 1825.

* * * * * *

It is wonderful how many have interested themselves in me, and how many of my friends pour in their congratulations on my late wonderful escape from sharing in the catastrophe of the Comet steam-boat.† I had a call the other day from old Henry

* Referring to the still precarious state of her daughter's health.

† The Comet steam-boat was lost on its voyage from Inverness to Greenock, and nearly all the passengers perished, in October, 1825. Mrs. Grant was prevented, by an accident, from being a passenger in that vessel.

Mackenzie, who has indeed been always my frequent visiter: you will be surprised to hear of the old man attending the Royal Society at eighty, and reading memoirs, written with much spirit and accuracy. The subject of a paper which he read there a fortnight since was the operation of the mind in dreams, — a proof, in addition to a thousand others, of the independence of spirit upon matter, — the mind performing such complex operations while all the bodily organs are inert. He mentioned, as an instance, that last summer, in his sleep, he had translated a French epigram into correct English; this, on awaking, he wrote down, and sent to Professor Dugald Stewart as a curiosity. He added, in his paper, several instances in which Coleridge's muse had literally visited his dreams.

Encouraged by finding the same thing had happened to others, I ventured to tell Mr. Mackenzie what I had scarcely ever mentioned to any one, for fear of having my veracity called in question, — a point I am as jealous upon as an Irish duellist. The circumstance occurred in the last century, on board the good ship Africa, on my way from America. I dreamed that I saw, lying folded on the cabin floor, a paper like a street-ballad, coarse and dirty: I unfolded it, however, and read, in "gude black print," a ballad consisting of fourteen verses, most, if not all, of which I distinctly remembered when I waked; they resembled nothing I had ever read or heard. So little was I aware of possessing powers which had lain dormant in my mind, that when I waked I scrambled about my berth in search of the non-existent paper. The subject

was the launching of a man-of-war. The verses (which I could not write, being confined to bed) slipped, one by one, from my memory: all I now recollect is a chorus at the end of each verse. A few nights ago there was another meeting of the Royal Society, for which the veteran sent my son a ticket. What was his surprise to hear Mr. Mackenzie mention to the Society, as an additional proof of his statement on the former evening, that a friend of his, Mrs. G. of L., had dreamed a dream, &c.

The size of my paper, and the poverty of matter, has led to all this wandering. I am anxious to hear of Mrs. Robert Brown's safety, as also of Mr. Maccall, and hope you will soon write to me. Believe me, ever gratefully and truly, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXCIII.

TO MRS. GRANT, OF DUTHIL, NAIRN.

Dear Mrs. Grant, Edinburgh, 2d February, 1826.

I wish with all my heart I could, without the appearance of self-confidence, give you some idea of the extent and variety of my correspondence, as it would make the best apology for my doing so much less than gratitude demands in regard to my old friends.

* * * * * *

I hope I have now made it pretty clear that I have less to account for, on the score of delay, than most

people. Perhaps I should have amused you more by a slight sketch of my pilgrimage, last autumn, than by this dry detail of circumstances, that merely serve to show I am, when long silent, neither lazy nor indifferent. I have neither time nor room to dilate on my travels, which were performed in every variety of vehicle in which a human being could be transported, with the exception of a balloon; but it was a pilgrimage of hope, and my spirit, naturally buoyant, was kept up by seeing symptoms of gradual amendment in my patient. I shall pass by other places, to tell you how much I was pleased with the appearance of every thing in Strathspey, which is more improved since I was there before, than I could have imagined. This you can scarcely judge of, as all that I admired as new, grew up gradually under your eyes; yet you must have been sensible of a change, were it only in the growth of the planting. It was gratifying to see the decent farm-houses and comfortable-looking cottages sheltered in groves, that were scarcely breast high when I was last there. I staid a fortnight, chiefly with Miss Grant, Rippachy; a day or two, however, was spent at Castle Grant, where the ladies were all kindness. Of the Castle I say little, because great houses and their owners find enough to describe them. I afterwards paid a short visit at a place where I found much room for agreeable speculation, and was in various ways gratified to the utmost. It was at Kinchurdie*, where I had the pleasure of seeing

* The residence of the Miss Grants, on the river Spey, nearly opposite to Rothiemurchus.

a large family of deserving females living in comfort and harmony in a house built and furnished in excellent taste, where nothing was wanting that quiet elegance could require,—and all the result of their patient and laudable industry. What a beautiful place Kinchurdie is, and how judiciously they have bestowed on it the little embellishment that it wanted. Of our progress homeward, our escape from the steam-boat, &c., you would see rather too much in the newspapers. We certainly cannot be thankful enough for our deliverance.

Evil news flies fast. You have no doubt heard of the failure of Constable, our great bookseller, which is really a national misfortune. It was no small boast that we arrived to pre-eminence in a style of writing that produced a sensation throughout Europe; a liberality in what is, *par eminence*, called the trade, that induced our southern neighbours to come here for the purpose of publishing their works, and a perfection in the art of printing that threw all competition behind. Besides the ruling star, so long and so justly predominant, all the parties principally involved in this wreck are, in their different ways, deserving,—some, indeed, highly meritorious. The Minstrel is too great a man ever to be lessened by adverse circumstances; he has already resisted all the power by which prosperity so often shakes the foundations of virtue. Loaded as he has been with honours, and the semblance, at least, of wealth, neither fame nor fortune shook the equanimity of his steadfast soul, or changed the simplicity of his natural delightful manners. He will, I

am certain, bear this vicissitude as he bore the harder trial of the two; I think if any difference appears, it will consist in a kind of modest dignity, which will become the well-balanced mind that was humble in prosperity. What do we not owe to this highly-gifted being, not only for purifying and refining our taste, and sweeping the paltry trash of inglorious novels, like cobwebs, from the palace of invention, but for diffusing among our young men that gentlemanly and elevated spirit, which he bestows on all whom he invests with that character. As the victim of misdirected pride, the hapless though unequalled Lord Byron drew the portraits of his gloomy, guilty, and misanthropic heroes from the original in his own mind. Our minstrel, all courteous, chivalrous, and generous as he is, without fear or reproach, is unconsciously the mirror from which his gentlemen take their form and pressure.

I must now leave off sinning against my conscience, that is, writing by candle-light, and shall only add, that I am, with regard, yours, truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXCIV.

TO MRS. HOOK.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 13th February, 1826.

Though very partial to Georgiana's correspondence, I feel much pleasure in seeing your own hand once more, of which this prompt reply is evidence. I returned home in November from the west country, loaded with a dumb sulky cold, that never showed any outward symptoms, but seemed to chill the marrow in my bones, and hang a weight of lead on my spirits. In this sad case I found, awaiting my arrival, congratulatory letters from all quarters on my providential escape from the fatal steam-boat; and I think there was scarcely a person in Edinburgh that I had ever spoken to, stupid or lively, friendly or heartless, that did not come to see me. Observe, I had been half a year absent, and became quite the fashion because I was not drowned. My cold, however, in due time departed, carrying off with it every vestige of disorder, and leaving me in perfect health, for which I desire to be most thankful. I left Mary among her west-country friends, but am to have her home before the end of this month; and in the meanwhile I have had an agreeable substitute in Mary Maccoll, a young relation of my own, who is quite a maiden after my own heart. But however inclined, I will not now stop to praise her.

It is time, after saying so very much about myself, that I should change the subject to something

better,—the volume of Prayers, for instance, which you sent to me; they are truly admirable, that is, they are so considered by better judges than I can pretend to be. I must next answer your question about Tremaine, which I do reluctantly, for I am very sorry that I can neither at all admire, nor much approve of, a work written, I believe, with the very best intentions, and meant to advocate the best principles, both political and religious. It is a feeble prosing book, which may however be not only agreeable, but in some measure useful, to feeble prosing people; but it will never convert an infidel, because none of those conceited gentry will wade through all the painfully tedious theology, and wire-drawn arguments. The task of giving suitable manners, language, and sentiments to a man of refinement requires a great deal more of that sublimated spirit of fine sense, and fine taste, than the author of this work is master of. There is nothing provokes me so much as the presumption of those who, altogether unequal to the task, injure a noble cause by a feeble defence, open on all sides to the shafts of ridicule. We hear much of the author's being a man of station in society.—What is that to the purpose? It is the rank he holds in the realm of intellect that gives value to his work, or sinks it below par. Blest be the shade of Richardson, who bequeathed to us the divine Clarissa, shining through sufferings, glorious in her fall, and almost visible in her ascent to the regions of immortality. Matchless creation of the only mind that ever conceived and drew truly a Christian heroine, with all her sex's softness, love-

liness, and grace, and all the self-devotion, undeviating rectitude, and lively faith of the primitive martyrs! What are his numerous blemishes but dust in the balance, when compared to his endless beauties? But then his faults are obvious to every common mind, and no common mind takes in his merits.

Give my love to Georgiana, and congratulate her, for me, on her love for Johnson, whom I love better than any of the illustrious shades of the last century, with the exception of Burke, who has always been the idol of my imagination. I respect Johnson as much,—think affectionately of his kindness to all the Lovetts, Williamses, &c., and am quite charmed with his bringing home oysters, himself, for his cat. Great is my veneration for the memory of the majestic moralist, whose mighty mind and preponderating virtues forced esteem from those who were daunted by his righteous boldness, and disgusted by his uncourtly manners. Go on, dear Georgiana, like him better and better still. It is setting up a high good masculine taste, preferring the virtues to the graces, and learning to prefer high talent, sound principle, and undeviating truth, though clouded with mental infirmities, to all "that shines to bewilder, and dazzles to blind." There is a region in your memory which should be—what Westminster Abbey was meant to be—hallowed as a place to preserve the memory of the great, the good, the noble in mind, the lofty in intellect, and the humble excellence that has only lived in the circle of friendship, among those you love and honour. Now, if you listen to fastidious

criticism or party prejudice, this region will be thinly inhabited: we meet with no angels except Moore's, who are poor shadows indeed; and to extend and enrich this region we must people it with mortals with their infirmities. Good night, my dear; I have something now to tell your mother.

Do you know, my dear friend, that I got a legacy of a thousand pounds last week, which was left me, in a Will dated ten years ago, by a West Indian boy, whom I brought up, partly at Laggan, and since at Woodend. There is a pretty romantic story involved in this history, but it is too long, and the hour too late to tell it by candle-light. But I will tell it next time, if you show any desire to know it. I conclude with my son's best respects to you all, in which his mother cordially joins. I am, indeed, always, my dear friend, yours, most affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXCV.

TO MRS. WILLS, BAGOT STREET, DUBLIN.

My dear Mrs. Wills, Edinburgh, 23d February, 1826.

You must not think, when you do not hear from me, that you have *lost your place*, or that the little corner in which you lodge is grown cold. I really have not leisure to be figurative, but there is no time I feel more inclined to indulge these sports of fancy

than when I am, as now, recovering from an illness. Do not be alarmed; I have been, for a wonder, under medical control; but my illness, though severe and inconvenient, was not in the least dangerous.

* * * * * *

An event has just been announced which has thrown our little world into complete astonishment. Constable the bookseller has become bankrupt for a very large sum,—I cannot exactly say how much, and Sir Walter Scott is involved in this misfortune. The grief I felt on this occasion was very different indeed from the qualified sympathy with which Rochefoucault supposes us to regard the misfortunes of our friends. It was keen, deep, and by no means transient; every time I hear any allusion to him I grieve anew. I do not care about Constable personally, yet I find room for a little corner for him, for he has had by two marriages ten children. Next to our Scottish Shakspeare I lament for the kind-hearted, talented, and liberal-minded James Ballantyne. This crash has little analogy to banks and cotton-mills, on the fall of which you hear a great noise, and there is much individual suffering; but after the panic is over, in many cases, the suffering party is restored to independence. But here is a loss, national and irreparable. It was so creditable to Scotland, that English authors of distinguished name came to sell their works to Constable,—who certainly adventured boldly,—and the first-rate productions were sent to Ballantyne's press, which was not supposed to be surpassed in Europe.

After all this lamentation you will be sensible that

23202

at this time any attempt to promote the circulation of your friend's work would be unavailing. Your dear mother and others from your country have asked if I had heard how Sir Walter liked it. Alas! his visual orbs, I fear, by that time required euphrasy and rue to clear the mists of doubt and apprehension. A person, who to so many high endowments adds a superior portion of sound common sense, could not be quite insensible to the coming storm; but after the blast has passed over he will still be able to say, "All is lost but honour." He sells his town-house, which was a very moderate one: his entertainments were simple in comparison with those given by others, — no excess of any kind; but then —

> "That perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
> Where no crude surfeit reigns,"

that his guests found in his conversation, drew so many to his table, that the literal roast and boiled feast was perpetual. It is impossible to say what numbers of strangers from the Continent, from America, from the uttermost parts of the earth, were attracted to his house by his fame, and retained by his kindness. Every one brought an introduction from some friend, and every introduction was honoured; and then I should require a sheet of larger paper were I to tell you half his liberality to poor authors. His is indeed "the heart of kindness, and the soul of honour." I said, when I heard of this misfortune, that I was sure the high-souled magnanimity, that made him bear more both of the highest kind of fame, and the most desirable kind of prosperity, that ever

any human being won by his own efforts, so early in life,—the same well-governed spirit would, I was sure, appear unshaken under this reverse; and I was right. Abbotsford, the passion of his life, was his weakness, as every one must have some; it was classical in the midst of the scenes of old celebrity; he covered its nakedness at great expense—for it was bleak and bare,—and then built a dwelling, neither tower, bower, nor castle, but a fanciful mixture of all three, so embowered and be-pinnacled. One of the chief mortifications arising from all this is, that his works, seized by his creditors, must be owned as his. Adieu to the transparent veil!

My letter to your mother must, I fear, be a little querulous. I have laboured through a severe winter with indifferent health and worn-out feelings, but am, thank God, better; so is Mary, but not come home: she is to remain with the Jordanhill family, where she is at present, till my removal from this house takes place. I have only room to say that I am ever, very truly, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXCVI.

TO MISS MERCER, STOWEY HOUSE, SOMERSET.

Brae House, Edinburgh,
22d June, 1826.

My very dear Miss Mercer,

Your last letter was a most meritorious one, written under the circumstances. We all thought it very characteristic, both of your strong feelings of sympathy for your friends, and your buoyant spirit, so awake to all that is beautiful in the works of God, and the transcript from them by creatures made after his image. What would become of those who feel acutely, and appropriate the sorrows of others in addition to their proper share of suffering, if they were not borne up, on the light elastic wings of a lively imagination, into those aerial regions where fancy and taste escape for a little from the real evils of life. I thought it very unlikely that your beloved Edward Harkness would live to return. How good it was of him to remember us so kindly, who were prevented by the pressure of care and sorrow from paying him half the attention we wished. O, how much do they escape who leave this world innocent, before they have been corrupted by its snares, or grieved by its sorrows.

You will be glad to hear that Mary is much better, and appears in progress to being perfectly well, I trust. Of my new house*, which I had long coveted without even a hope of possessing it, I need say the less, as I

* Mrs. Grant had removed, about this time, to a detached house, surrounded by a garden, near the west end of Prince's Street.

find you have heard of it from others. A garden, rich in fruit-trees, and on my arrival beautiful with loads of blossom, and affording shelter to swarms of little birds, as well as blackbirds and thrushes, is at the end: there is a most luxuriant bush of white roses at the west window, where I sit; it obtrudes its beauties at the open window, and is this moment filling the room with fragrance. I have a handsome drawing-room, with three windows looking to different quarters; a large, airy bed-room, commanding fine prospects, on the same floor, and behind that, my son's business room; and on the floors below and above are several good rooms. We pay for the whole only half the rent of the house in Princes Street. My out-door precincts are invaluable to me; yet this heavenly weather, which has brought Italy to Scotland, is adverse to some of my pursuits; it has withered and burnt up hundreds of annuals that were sown under the trees before the door.

I think it is since you left us that Miss L. was married, to a plain, steady-looking man, who has an estate in ——shire, is sober and regular, and keeps hounds and a carriage, of which Mrs. L. is not a little proud. She has also a fine carriage of her own, doats on her daughter, writes to her every day, and talks of her every hour; in short, she is a very coarse caricature of Madame de Sevigné. That pleasant, good, and lady-like person, Miss Bowes, came to see me before she went north, and spoke of you in the highest terms of affection and regard. Mary desires to be most kindly remembered; and I remain, dear Miss Mercer, with warm esteem, yours, very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXCVII.

TO MRS. FREDERICK GRANT, MOUNT CYRUS, MONTROSE.

Brae House, Edinburgh,
8th July, 1826.

My dear Mrs. Grant,

Do not think that your kindness, always constant, and most cordially shown in your late invitation, was unfelt or unvalued. I mean to accept it, though I never expected to have gone again so far from home, and will do it with the greater pleasure, as Mary is so much better, that she will be capable of enjoying a visit to one for whom she has always cherished a more than common affection.

I did not hear at the time it happened of your loss, which you well know to be your sensible, engaging Frederick's gain. Our mental sight, which pursues these objects of our tenderest affection beyond the reach of sense, is dim and clouded at best; but the sense of suffering, in having any thing entwined with our heart-strings torn from us, is present, acute, and mingles with every feeling. I still feel a pang at the recollection of what it cost me to part with a wonderful premature boy of four years old. It was my first affliction; and consolation was distressing to me, because I knew how little any one but a suffering parent can enter into that distress where a child, too young to interest any but those about him, is taken away from the evil to come.

We are always getting new lessons in this region of vicissitude. Last winter I often thought how happy you must all have been together, with Mr.

Grant's brother, your mother, and Robina. You are still surrounded with blessings, — so kind and good a husband, such unabated worldly prosperity, and such promising children growing up around you. It would well become you, then, to yield up a choice lamb of your flock, without repining, to the Giver of all; — reluctantly, no doubt, but if it were not dear to you, it would not be a trial, nor would there be merit in resignation.

I look forward to a degree of calm enjoyment with you to which I have long been a stranger. Indeed, I ought to acknowledge (though Mary's state of health was a great drawback to the satisfaction I had in it) that this house, with its quiet shades, and its seclusion comparatively with the noise and publicity of our former residence, has been a great enjoyment to me. With best regards to Mr. Grant, I am yours, with sincere regard,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXCVIII.

TO MRS. FLETCHER, AUCHENDINNY HOUSE, PENNYCUICK.

Edinburgh, 14th December, 1826.

My dear Friend,

I have spent eight days lately at Blackford House with one who admires and esteems you not a little, — Miss Trotter of Mortonhall. Upon this occasion I cast care behind me, having laid out a plan of home occupation and amusement for the family. I

was more than comfortable with the good old lady and some pleasant intelligent friends that came and went while I was there. One visiter, extremely amusing, and I believe estimable, was Miss * * * *. I think you must know something of six fair vestals, none of them young, who live in Edinburgh, with a mother of most venerable antiquity. What a history is theirs! Two distinguished beauties, two wits, and two ingenious damsels full of rare devices, who drew, and played, and worked all manner of cunning workmanship, furnished abundant variety of characters and complexions. Great was their celebrity some thirty years since, and much were they caressed and sought after among the nobles of the land. Still it was their lot to live on, unrepining in single blessedness;—truly such, for they are all very cheerful and intelligent, and live in the happiest union among themselves. I begin to think that those sensible contented single women, who have outlived the turbulence and flutter of expectation and admiration, and think of nothing but being pleasant companions and good aunts here, and joining those who walk pre-eminently in white, hereafter, are perhaps, on the whole, more exempt from suffering, and have more unmixed enjoyment, than we whose hearts are always either mourning the departed, or aching with fear and anxiety for the living. The sense that turns at the touch of joy or woe, but turning trembles too, is like a pendulum in constant motion with us meritorious matrons. My partiality for the single state does not comprehend men; they require some of that unbought grace of life which is only to be found in female worth and affection.

Celibacy with them is rarely respectable. Think how contemptible they grow for the most part under the sway of their housekeeper.

I must tell you much of Miss Trotter when I see you; but the glimpses I get of you are so transient, that I have no scope for my garrulity,—so I take it out on paper. I am only beginning to find myself in the nineteenth century, having retrograded into the eighteenth at Blackford House, and had the shades of the wise, the worthy, and the eminent called up to pass in review before me,—"their fathers in their habits as they lived." They had faults and follies as well as ourselves, but not so much artificial nonsense, —in short they were less fastidious. Adieu, dear friend, ever kind and unchanging to your grateful

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCXCIX.

TO A FRIEND IN THE UNITED STATES, AMERICA.

Brae House, Edinburgh,
16th January, 1827.

My dear Friend,

I suppose that a letter of mine, written nearly a year ago, has never reached you; at least I think you would have acknowledged it, if it had. Mary has been for some time past going on very well; at present she has been for a few days confined in consequence of a common cold, which deprives her of the exercise which is essential to her; or I should rather blame the thick foggy weather, for were it not for that she might have ventured out.

We had quite an Italian summer,—bright blue skies, more heat than ever was known here, and crops very early ripened, but very short. I am more interested in the weather since my removal here, which I must have told you of in my last. The house is a large one, standing a little off the Lothian road, about twenty yards to the south of Prince's Street, very near the beautiful chapel of St. John. There is a large garden at the west end of the house, perfectly rural, being full of trees and birds: we only cultivate a small part of it, as they talk of building on it; but we have an enclosure before the door, with some tall old trees and stately iron gates, that give a most respectable appearance to a house once considered very fine, and still in full repair and very convenient. Here I cultivate flowers,—it would be ridiculous to say with how much care, or how much time I devote to them; they are the playthings of my old age, which demands amusement as much as childhood, were it but as a temporary escape from the pains of memory: moreover this superannuated passion does me a great deal of good, as it induces me to take exercise. Though I am lame I am not lazy, and with the help of my wooden supporters am sometimes on foot for two hours together.

* * * * * *

I wish to know who wrote the criticism on Lord Byron in your North-American Review, which I think an admirable one, full of sound sense, discrimination, and just moral feeling. Yet I must be indulged in a little hyper-criticism: it is rather a sweeping censure to say that Lord Byron was corrupted or

depraved by his intercourse with the profligate nobility; for it so happens that the greater number of the English nobility, at this very time, are of honourable feelings and exemplary conduct,—men who do honour to their rank and their country. Of Lady Byron,—highly informed and accomplished, richly endowed both by nature and fortune, yet dwelling meekly in the shade of retirement,—

> "As mild and patient as the female dove,
> When first her golden couplets are disclos'd;"

bearing with patience her own hard lot, and the published sarcasm of her malignant lord, devoting herself to her superior duties, a blessing to all around by her pious example and liberal charity—of her I have neither time nor room to speak as she deserves. Her injuries from him she never did nor will disclose. It should be observed that the most cordial intimacy has always subsisted between her and Mrs. Leigh, the half-sister of Lord Byron.

Now, having said so much of one whom, in all her retired meekness, I consider as a great woman, it remains to say something of a great man;—I mean Sir Walter Scott, who, through the softened shade of adversity, appears to me greater than ever. He lives with his daughter only, in a small house near us, seeing no company, and devoted to his literary labours; but when he is seen, placid, cheerful, and unaltered. I quit this theme unwillingly, and must now demand the recollection of my Transatlantic friends. Mary will speak for herself soon, and sends love in the mean time to all her constant and much valued friends

around you. Convey to them the expression of my regard, and write soon to yours, most truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCC.

TO MRS. HOOK, THE DEANERY, WORCESTER.

Brae House, Edinburgh,
26th May, 1827.

My dear Friend,

I wrote a hasty note, introducing my American friend, Miss D., to you, not at all expecting that you would be much captivated by her republican frankness, eagerness of manner, high tide of spirits, and a kind of artless egotism. The genuine worth, original character, perfect rectitude of principle and conduct, and generosity in the most liberal sense of the term, which would conquer the prejudice which your refinement would arm against her, could not be perceived in the short time she would have remained in Worcester. Of this I was well aware; but it was not your pleasure, but hers, that I consulted in this introduction: I was sure that she would be highly gratified in seeing you, having the most sincere admiration of the qualities in which she herself is most deficient. This I call generosity. I knew I should also please her very much by an introduction to Miss, more properly Mrs. Joanna Baillie. This was a hazardous measure, for the consequence derived from wealth was as nothing to her; and I could scarcely expect the first impression to be favourable. It proved so, however:

the Muse saw into the candour and artlessness of her character, liked her much, and wrote me a very pleasing letter, expressive of her perfect comprehension and warm approbation. The acquaintance, I find, has gone on and prospered.

I will say no more of this exotic, but congratulate you on the publicity, notoriety, or distinction that you have attained when your journey is so formally announced in the newspapers. You used to go quietly to town from Hertfordshire without any such notification. Mr. Dean can go no further till he arrives on the hallowed bench in the House of Lords. In good time; but I would have him no further south than Carlisle. When you came to Worcester, I indulged in a dream of your being so much nearer me, that, by some means or another, I should see you all once more. If you were at Carlisle I should dream on. I congratulate you on your dear Walter being appointed one of the King's chaplains. I should like much to hear what the Dean thinks of this sudden overthrow of the ministry, and expect a hint at least from you. We, who take no very deep concern in politics further than being quiet, contented, true blue Tories, are a little disappointed. We hoped that certain high and influential persons would have got in among the changes, in which case some little provision might have been made for one very dear to me among the vacancies which admit young lawyers. I am very patient for myself, but not quite so much so for him: to see a person possessed of many other merits than that of being my son, suffering under the heart-sickness of hope long deferred, does affect me in some

degree. But when bereaved as I have been, and in this respect less prosperous than I had room to hope, still I feel favoured in comparison of others, whose sons, more fortunate in worldly matters, are less dutiful, less virtuous, and less amiable.

It would do you good to see the childish pleasure I take in seeing my annuals peep out, and my lilacs bloom. To you, who have dwelt amidst the wealth of Flora wherever you had a home, my exertions would appear to have very poor results. But to a mountaineer, who has been long in populous city pent, — verdure, trees, open space, the rugged majesty of the castle on its everlasting rock above, — the simple church, where old Sir Harry Moncrieff appears stern and venerable, like the very genius of Presbytery, — and the beautiful chapel of St. John in its immediate vicinity, where Bishop Sandford, more gently venerable, breathes the milder spirit of Episcopacy, — all these objects are well bestowed on me, for I think few would take as much interest in them. Your sympathy with all the very much that you know me to have suffered, has been so often and so painfully awakened, that if any alleviating circumstance occurs I have pleasure in telling it to you. Why should I croak to those who, I know, cannot call back the departed, and would delight to see me enjoy as much comfort as a storm-beaten traveller through life can expect in its decline.

I would now say something of books, but fear that I have left little room for the purpose. I hope you admire Mrs. Hemans as much as I do. I have much to say of her, but no time to say it just now.

L. E. L.* has too little variety for me; every thing is so impassioned: I wish she would mix a little sage with her myrtle garland. If you wish to know a great deal about Italy, read a most pleasing and authentic work, "Rome in the Nineteenth Century." You will scarcely believe it to be the production of a lady; but it is written by a Scotch lass, Miss Waldie, who lived on bonny Tweedside.

Mary, who continues to improve in health, joins me in all manner of regard and respect to the Dean, and to His Majesty's chaplain, and your amanuensis, Georgiana, whom I wish to resume that office for the benefit of yours, most truly, most affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCI.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Brae House, Edinburgh,
12th September, 1827.

My dear Friend,

Self-conceit is a fine comfortable thing after all; especially when people grow old, outlive many friends, and, without abundance of self-opinion, might be apt to think themselves (as they often are) neglected. Now, if I were not a self-satisfied person, I might say, that if you wished to hear from me you would send ere now a few lines to show your recollection of me; yet, what with the perfect confidence I have in your affection, and some conviction that I deserve it, as far as integrity and grateful affection

* Miss Landon.

can do so, I only tremble for your health when I find you long silent. Of that, however, I am at present pretty well assured by your journey to London; but I want to make assurance doubly sure, by knowing how you stood the journey, and how you have held out since you returned home. My solicitude about you is like that of a fine lady about a very fine China jar,—not merely as it is valuable, but as it is fragile. I wish I could send you a little of my wondrous constitution, which neither sorrow, age, nor lameness have much impaired.

Pray do say what the Dean and you think of Walter the Wonderful, in his new character of historian,—I should say, biographer.* The Whigs cavil at it, for which reason I feel much inclined to cavil at the Whigs. I glory in his equanimity; the great calm mind, that was never elated by prosperity unequalled, and fame unbounded, bears his reverses with the calmest fortitude.

Except in a single instance, you never tell me what you think of any body or any thing. Now I should not wish you to fatigue yourself writing long letters; but if you would deliver your sentiments and opinions with some "family legend," and a little pleasant gossip, literary or domestic, to Georgiana, the exertion would do *you* no harm, do *me* a great deal of good, and give me a great deal of pleasure. I have seen so many people here whom I never expected to see, that, by a kind of second sight, you appear to me entering my iron gates, and looking up to my tall trees.

* The "Life of Napoleon" had been published about this time.

Now I want very much to know what you think of Mrs. Hemans's poetry, and what you think of herself if you know about her. I am glad, for the credit of my American friends, to tell you that some of their literary people, particularly a distinguished professor in Harvard College—Norton by name—have so profound an admiration of her talents and character, and so great a sympathy with her struggles in bringing up her family, that they are now publishing her poems by subscription: this I am told will be a very ample one. I should remind you that they did the same for me twenty years ago; but then I had personal friends among them, and was considered as a nursling of their own: in this case it is a pure tribute to merit, equally honourable to the givers and the receiver.

I have started over here from the west country on some business, wishing not to have it known I was here, but I am found out however. A lady, who lives very near me, is an invalid, and staid in town for the attendance of physicians, summoned me last evening to meet her confessor, Dr. Chalmers, a person whose genius and whose piety I respect highly, though there are certain points on which I differ much from him. There is a perfect artlessness and originality about his conversation that is very pleasing; he is modest too, and quite unspoilt. He and the great Well-known are the only persons I see whose manners are perfectly simple.

I have just come out of a warm bath, to which I propose to return directly. By this I mean that stream of cordial kindness which is poured out for me

by three generations of friends,—Mrs. Smith, of Jordanhill, who, after fifty years of devoted attachment, improves like old wine; her three sons and a daughter, all most happily and respectably married in early life; and their children, all inheriting their parents' attachment. I have for twenty years sought refuge in this harbour of calm felicity for some weeks about this season: for the two past years it was out of my power, therefore I make the most of my liberty. Mary I left there well, and hope to find her so: my son is in Ireland, where we have many friends, whom he long since promised to visit, in different parts of the green isle. My very best regards await the Dean, the King's young chaplain, and His Majesty's god-daughter, my future correspondent. Believe me, ever truly, cordially, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCII.

TO MRS. FLETCHER, AUCHENDINNY HOUSE, PENNYCUICK.

Edinburgh, 27th October, 1827.

My dear Friend,

We are come home very well,—Mary particularly so,—and well satisfied with spending so much time so pleasantly with the best of good people, drinking the old wine of ripe and mellowed friendship in a sanctuary of peace and love.

They seem to be feeding my son with Lotos in Ireland, where he appears to find more honour than at

home. Here we were ready to apply to him Wordsworth's apostrophe to heavy rain:—

"Yet be it always understood,
You're not so pleasant as you're good."

The Paddies, however, seem to have found him very pleasant indeed; so have his American friends the D.'s: they met him in Dublin, and enlisted him into their party to see sights; and I think he and they are this day at the Giant's Causeway, for which none of them care much, with the exception of John, who is a true lover of nature, either where she smiles or frowns. Yours, most truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCIII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, New-Year's Day, 1828.

Once more I offer my grateful and cordial wishes to you on the opening of another of the many years of undiminished affection, through which we have known and sympathised with each other. I may truly use the expression as regards myself, for I have rejoiced as much in your unclouded prosperity as you have mourned over my continued adversity, and those often repeated wounds of the heart that ought to have loosed my ties to earth, and made me seek refuge in a better hope than earth affords.

You will naturally desire to know how I am supported under this last stroke.* I was never more submissive, never on any occasion so fully convinced that the infliction was a dispensation of mercy to her who has been taken away; yet I never felt such a thorough sense of desolation, such a total want of interest in all that is said and done around me. This I vainly endeavour to conceal; it is indeed an unnatural state for a mind so active and excursive as mine has ever been. I do not on that account indulge the impiety of thinking myself forsaken by the Hand that has all along so wonderfully supported me. My task for more than two years past was a very painful one, — to cheer and amuse a drooping spirit. My dearest Mary might almost be said to have died with Isabella; — with that angelic being the life of life was extinguished. Since that time Mary was not a moment absent from my thoughts, and the object of perpetual solicitude. This chapter of sorrow and anxiety is now closed, but has left a blank behind not easily filled up.

All this I ought not to say; for what avails it? The pain I give you does not diminish the blank worse to me than actual suffering. My friends are very kind to me, though sometimes I feel even their kindness oppressive. All this I trust may work together for my good. Pray for me that I may not be afflicted in vain.

My son, who was deeply sunk from the time of our late loss, begins to revive a little, and is all to

* Mrs. Grant's last surviving daughter, Mary, died on 16th November, 1827.

me that duty and affection can be. Mary Maccoll is, as usual, sensible, spirited, and useful, and has already acquired a wonderful influence over her meek and amiable companion Margaret Steven. Offer my kind regards to your sister and all around you; and believe me, ever affectionately, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCIV.

TO THE REV. DR. DEWAR, GLASGOW.

Reverend dear Sir, Edinburgh, 22d January, 1828.

I trust in your charitable construction of my long delay in acknowledging your much-valued present.* At first I set myself seriously to peruse the Sermons, and meant not only to acknowledge the gift, but to give the donor some idea of the impression left on my mind by the perusal of the volume. I generally begin the morning with some serious reading, as many interruptions prevent my profitable perusal of such books through the day, and my early mornings are followed by languid and worn-out evenings: I did at length finish the volume.

The paper I write on will remind you of the sad and solemn interruption which, at the same time that it deepened the impression made on my mind by the doctrine which it is your honour and happiness

* A volume of Sermons by the Rev. Dr. Dewar of Glasgow, now Principal of Marischal College, Aberdeen (1843).

to inculcate, very much disqualified me from expressing myself to the purpose, on that or any other subject. I began yesterday to re-peruse the sermons; the one upon the Character of Christ, and that on the Penitent Thief, have very much engaged my attention. I mention these because I remember more of their contents than of the rest.

I spent a great part of last night in perusing manuscripts to me invaluable. They consist of letters written by my beloved and much afflicted daughter, Mary, to a highly-gifted Christian friend; they are written with a graceful elegance and simplicity almost peculiar to herself, and are precious to me as testimonies of the deep concern for her spiritual welfare, which was the ruling habit of her mind in her latter years. On this subject I would expatiate as a source of consolation to all her friends, as well as to one who, in the course of nature, must soon follow.

Though the subject might be supposed foreign to you, the proof of your regard in my possession gives me room to believe that my singular deprivations must have excited your sympathy; and you too will be consoled to know that I do not mourn as those that have no hope. I have great trust in intercessory prayers: may I solicit for the benefit of yours, that I may be enabled to profit my so many awful summonses to preparation for an unalterable state. Most truly may I say, "I believe," but greatly require to add, "Lord, help thou my unbelief." With best regards to your family, I am, dear Sir, your obliged and faithful servant,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCV.

TO MRS. HOOK, THE DEANERY, WORCESTER.

Edinburgh, 16th February, 1828.

My dear and much afflicted Friend *,

I have truly been for some time past. "sick of many sorrows," and now share deeply in yours with all its aggravations. You have so tender a heart lodged in a frame so delicate, and I have on former occasions, when the beloved partner of your heart was suffering from illness, felt so apprehensive on your account, that I have almost dreaded your surviving him. But what do we not survive, and what unhoped-for strength is often afforded at our utmost need, when we lean with unshaken confidence on Him who is mighty to save unto the uttermost! You are indeed the person, of all whom I have ever known, for whom I most dreaded a calamity of this overwhelming nature. And yet there are circumstances in your peculiar case that ought to make you sensible that to you, more than to most others, the text applies,—"Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil also?"

Those who are merely under the guidance of worldly opinions, and ungoverned feelings, may encourage and aggravate sorrow, by counting up the sum of that happiness of which they have been deprived, and dwelling on the desolation that darkens

* This letter was addressed to Mrs. Hook, soon after the death of her husband, the Dean of Worcester.

round them. But it is not so with the humble Christian: with such, the undeserved blessings we have enjoyed, the manna that has dropped upon our path through the wilderness of life, the sweet communion of souls that has existed betwixt us and kindred spirits fondly beloved, and worthy of all love,—these, by the devout mind, are not held fast as rights which we cannot endure to have torn away from us; they are to be considered as conditional gifts, to be resumed at the Giver's pleasure. What precious volumes of retrospection lie open to your view: do not, then, dwell on the dismal blank which every one, that has loved and been beloved like you, must feel on such a dividing asunder of soul and spirit. Consider all that you have enjoyed, and even much of what you have suffered, as the treasures of memory, to be contemplated with a kind of mournful pleasure when the recent wound has ceased to bleed. I am so practised in affliction in all its darkest forms that I feel entitled to speak of my experience to one who is, comparatively, a novice in the school of calamity.

Think now with gratitude of the blessings you have enjoyed:—the first love of your heart crowned with success so gratifying, and justified by such virtues, such a generous candid temper, such fine and various talents, and the principles without which all these would be unavailable. Consider how rare is such an assemblage of fine qualities, with such warm affections, and how ill a different character would have suited with a heart so susceptible, and a mind so sensitive, as yours. You had at times your difficulties; and who has not, of one kind or another? But

there is something endearing in encountering these together, and much enjoyment in conquering them: these struggles give strength to the mind and moderation to the desires. I see none have less enjoyment than those whose full cup seems to afford the means of constant felicity. Had you been always in the sunshine of prosperity, the pleasures of the heart and of the intellect could not have been dealt to you in such full measure, nor could you have had the same leisure for attending to your superior duties. Think how very much has fallen to your share of what in life is most desirable; and dread the impiety of murmuring because the object of an affection, perhaps too ardent, is happier than prosperity, or than even you could make him. Consider, also, with humble gratitude, what a treasure you possess in a son so devoted to you,—so pious and so dutiful. How much happier you may now, even now, consider yourself, with such excellent children watching over you with the tenderest solicitude, compared with others who see those whom they have reared with unwearied affection, and looked forward to as the comfort of declining years, drop into an untimely grave, or hazard life on dangerous seas or in pernicious climates.

My dear, dear friend, I trust to hear that you consider yourself as the favoured child of many mercies; and that your strength will not fail in this trial, severe though it be. Believe you are much—I might say constantly—in my thoughts; and that I am, with more endeared affection, yours, most truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCVI.

TO MRS. WILLS, THOMASTOWN, IRELAND.

My dear Mrs. Wills, Edinburgh, 12th March, 1828.

One sad and sorrowful excuse will naturally suggest itself to you for my long silence. Since I have been deprived of her, who, to a still dearer name added that of an intelligent and gifted companion, and affectionate congenial friend, I have felt a repugnance to writing. Of my dear Mary I could write volumes to any one to whom she was intimately known; yet I have not, even to those, poured out the fulness of my heart on this too tender theme. Memory is crowded with recollections most painful to myself; and I wound my own heart anew in recurring to the past. Ten weeks, in which she seemed on the eve of being restored to me (appearing every day more like herself), preceded the short illness that opened her way to felicity, and left me desolate indeed. I asked and received from her friend, Miss Fletcher, the series of letters, often very short and hurried, which she had addressed to her in the interval betwixt Isabella's death and her own illness. I may now say that I was lost in astonishment to see her even then, when "sick of many sorrows," preserving so much of the easy and natural grace of her diction, the unaffected flow of pious and tender feeling, and the purity and elegance of her style, even in those hurried sketches of a fine mind seeking the Divine support and the cor-

dial of friendship under overwhelming sorrow. . . . . How I have given way (certainly without intention) to a theme which in general I studiously avoid! Could I have recorded her expressed thoughts when eternity was opening before her, it might afford something for the mind to dwell on; but, alas! after being two days indisposed without any alarming symptom, the morning of the third found her insensible. The source of all her disorder had been a tendency of blood towards the head, which had then come to a crisis; and she departed the following morning without being conscious, they said, of pain.

Young says, in his quaint way, of misfortunes, "They love a train, they tread each other's heels." Death has of late never ceased crossing my path in a manner the most startling to all we hope and most desire in life, and most touching to my individual feelings. You may perhaps have heard us speak of a lady possessed of uncommon spirit and talents, an heiress of a large fortune, who was, at fourteen years of age, placed under my care. She lived seven years with me, and was afterwards married to Lord John Campbell, brother and heir to the Duke of Argyll. The marriage proved a very happy one; and the family line, which seemed fading into extinction, is now likely to be continued. Drinking out of the fullest cup of human felicity, the bitter dregs of that dangerous cup were also her allotted portion. Her husband was most devoted in tender, unwearied attention, and her children were all that her warmest wishes could desire; but for the last year she suffered the most severe pain. . . . . We saw her

in autumn, feeble and emaciated, unable to move without help, yet the soul with all its singular energies was undiminished in power. Alas! "dust to dust concludes her noblest song." She died little more than two months after the friend to whom she was so much attached.

Another friend of my dear Mary's, a lovely and excellent person, one much younger than herself, whose angelic countenance and spotless mind always seemed to speak her a stranger in this world hastening to a better, is now on the brink of eternity, if not already joined to those of whom the world was not worthy. Mrs. Frederick Grant, like Lady J. C., leaves behind her all that is thought to constitute earthly felicity, in a worthy husband, lovely promising children, a large estate, and many attached friends. But death steals upon her in his mildest form, and her calm cheerfulness has not been diminished by his approach. She went to England for milder air, but consumption had made too great advances before.

How can I think to interest you in people so utterly unknown to you? I do not usually try thus to transfer my own feelings: you may take my doing so as an implied compliment. It is high time I should acknowledge all your kindness to my son, when in Ireland, of which, I can assure you, he was truly sensible. You and Mr. Wills I know to be so much one, that when I speak of kindness I evidently mean yours and his. He is also very grateful to you for the privilege, which he values highly, of an introduction to your uncle the Chief Justice*, who pos-

* The Right Hon. Charles Kendal Bushe.

sesses exactly those qualities in addition, in which Pope's friend was most deficient. Tell him how grateful I feel for his more than hospitable kindness to my son. Believe me, with cordial esteem, dear Mrs. Wills, yours, very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCVII.

TO MISS GRANT, OF KINCORTH, HASTINGS.

Edinburgh, 13th March, 1828.

My dear Robina,

I think you can hardly be aware of the deep sympathy with which I regard the heavy blow which has fallen upon you.* In the midst of life we are in death.—How strongly have I been made to feel this for some time past, till it seems as if the world were darkening around me.

To lament that such an angelic being, as your sister, should escape early from all the ills of life, would be most sinful in all, and more so in me, who for my short remaining time could have seen so little of her. There was about her such an air of hallowed purity, so little of earth or the earthly, that I could never think of her as a creature to remain long here. How soothing to think of her heavenward path to the grave, retaining, as I am told, her mild cheerfulness amid the

* The death of her sister, Mrs. Grant of Mount Cyrus, alluded to in the previous letter.

decay of nature, and moving with her wonted sweet serenity to the appointed dwelling of the righteous. It is to you a sore and wounding separation; but how many bitter pangs have you been spared by the comparative tranquillity of her last days. Few, very few, were entitled to quit all worldly hopes and enjoyments with such tranquillity. But besides the shrinking of nature from the hour of dissolution, how much would your distress have been aggravated if you had seen her in torture with bodily pain. You have too much sense, and I trust too much piety, to sink under a stroke you have been so long prepared for, and which leaves you so many urgent duties to call out your tenderest feelings, and most anxious attentions. The task before you, of emulating your sister's virtues, caring for her children, and keeping yourself, as she did, unspotted from the world, will be of itself a consolation.

Poor Mr. Grant!—I think of him with very great compassion. His cup of worldly happiness was too full to endure: it began to spill on the death of his lamented boy, and has been draining away ever since: your sister never recovered the suffering she then endured. Her husband fully appreciated her worth, and is, I am sure, very sensible that he has lost, in her, what never can be compensated by any thing that earth has to give. But, instead of repining, he should think himself highly favoured in having had such a treasure so long in his keeping, and having thus the means of knowing, as far as can be known here, what angels are. Let him consider her as having left a track of light behind her, on which his attention

should be fixed amidst all the sorrows and evils that cloud the most prosperous. Besides the great rule of right to be found in the bosom of every honourable man, he will, by cherishing her memory, have a sweet influence ever acting on his mind. Every thing commendable, kind, or charitable that he does will be accompanied by a feeling such as—"This my Davina would approve;" and in a case of doubt, he will think she would have determined in this way. Who could sufficiently value a companion with a head so clear, a heart so kind, and principles so immovably fixed?—her very memory will be a blessing to him. Tell him how well I understand his feelings, and how much I pity his desolation.

Keep up your spirits, with the Divine assistance, for the duties you have to perform, the mother you have to comfort, the children you have to love and cherish, and their poor bereaved father. I only add my love and sympathy, having long been yours, very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCVIII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 22d April, 1828.

My dear Friend,

This goes by Miss Gibson; that warm-hearted and affectionate person is going off suddenly, with a very heavy heart, to attend, as is too probable, the death-bed of a favourite niece.

The letters of the aged must needs be a sort of obituary. Approaching fast to the verge of life, not even the frequency of the occurrence prevents us from starting when we see our juniors, those whom we loved and cherished, going before us. I think I must have told you of the death of my dear Mrs. Grant of Mount Cyrus: the transition from her pious, blameless, and useful life to a happy immortality was scarcely perceptible; the manner of her death was like her life—something to meditate on with chastened pleasure.

Poor Dr. Hook, whom you must remember to have heard me speak of as the husband of a much valued friend; his death was a dreadful blow to his family, and to a wife who idolised him; he was singularly candid, artless, and warm-hearted, and possessed the finest talents: had he not been in the Church, he might have made his fortune by painting or music. It is about three years since he was appointed Dean of Worcester; and his death, after a short illness, happened six weeks ago. His son Walter, without his

father's shining talents, is better suited to his profession, to the duties of which he brings the simplicity and the zeal of an apostle.

Mrs. Henry Erskine and I met last week for the first time since she lost her distinguished husband, and I my afflicted daughter. She is now going to Craigforth for the summer, her house being occupied by her step-son Henry. She says she is now seventy years old, and will clear herself of all earthly cares and anxieties. The concerns of her soul will be better attended to in the pious family of Mrs. Callander than amidst the distractions of her present residence. Margaret Steven is with me, and is becoming a favourite; so is Grace, who is here on a visit. Their great affection for me, visible though not obtrusive, is irresistible; there is about them much plain worth, much purity of mind, and uprightness of intention. We have got a young lady, Miss Fulford, from Devonshire, — quite a curiosity, so ardent, so talented, and so bent on coming to me, that there was no restraining her. I must conclude in haste, with my love to Mrs. Brown, and entreat to hear from you soon; being, ever yours, affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCIX.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Brae House, Edinburgh,
4th June, 1828.

My dear Friend,

I wrote to you lately I know not what, being at that time in a very great hurry, and, as usual, often interrupted. I am always hurried while the General Assembly sits, for whenever it begins to stand and walk some of its northern members, more particularly, walk out here. I must not forget to tell you of an exploit of mine, which I think I should not have undertaken unless I had been prompted by my son. It was going last Saturday, *at six in the morning,* to hear the celebrated Mr. Edward Irving. He preached at seven in Sir Harry Moncreiff's church, which suited him from its great size, and me from its proximity. It was necessary to take possession of a seat an hour before the service began: my son went with me, and we were accommodated with a seat within good seeing and hearing distance, for seeing is indispensable. I should tell you that the sensation created by this setter-forth of new doctrines in the new Athens, reminds one of a more authentic preacher's influence in the old. I heard nothing that raised him above the place he formerly held in my opinion: but in justice I must add that the prophet is less affected and theatrical than I expected; that he has a very pleasing and well-modulated voice; and that his action is not unsuited to his doctrine, which he evidently supposes to be authorised by inspiration. Of his

discourse I will only say at present that it has little coherence, a great deal of verbiage, and no indication, that I can discover, of high imagination or sound reasoning. He is the sole subject of conversation;—

> "The neighbours sigh and stare, and bless the lad,
> Some think him wondrous wise, and some believe him mad."

I think this new system of unfolding prophecy is just a new and improved edition of the doctrine of the Fifth Monarchy men in Cromwell's time.

I shall now proceed to petty details of my own small matters. You must know I have within the last fortnight been surprised with presents from quarters the most unlikely imaginable. I do not talk of them to every one; but I have pleasure in recording kindness, and you will have pleasure in hearing it. First, Mr. Ryder, an English clergyman, who was here some weeks, left me a bust of Sir Harry Moncreiff, and six volumes, handsomely bound, of Walter Scott's miscellaneons works. Then a lady in Devonshire, the widow of General Crawford, who was killed in the Peninsula, wrote to Mrs. Hook, saying that she wished much to make me a present to the amount of twenty guineas, and begged to know what would be suitable, — that is, what Mrs. Hook thought so. Observe—I never saw the lady in my life, but I know her brothers and sisters, — all her family indeed. I wrote, not to the lady, but to Mrs. Hook, to say that I was very sensible of, and would not disappoint Mrs. C.'s kind intentions, but would accept of as much tea-china as *ten* guineas would purchase, as that was an article in which I was beginning to run short,

and I knew it was to be had very good at Worcester. Well, the china arrived last Wednesday; very beautiful it is, and the admiration of all beholders. On Friday, two days after, came a parcel most carefully packed in many papers, which turned out to be a silver salver, beautifully wrought, with a very kind letter, from Colonel Macpherson, whose father was our near neighbour at Laggan. We received him kindly when he was at school near us, of which he retained a grateful remembrance, and of which this gift was a token. Our friend the said Colonel has lately returned from India with an uncorrupted heart, as Johnson said of his Highland protegé.

I am most earnestly reading Mrs. Huntington's letters,—an American lady of whom you must have heard. They wound me with remorse, and cover me with shame and confusion; my mind and conduct, compared with hers, is like that of—

. . . . . "Man who mourns,
To the wrapt seraph who adores and burns."

I am ever yours, gratefully and affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCCX.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 18th July, 1828.

Though I am become a very lazy writer, I am always very much pleased to receive a letter from any of the few old friends that remain, and answer it readily on the spur of the occasion; but if I let it lie any time beside me, indolence takes possession of me. Of the few old friends I spoke of, you are the one I like best to hear from, because you are the oldest of the old in that class; which speaks well for us both, saying that *you* have not forgot the endearments of our early attachment, and that, amidst the severe pressure of a life of struggles and exigencies, *I* have not felt a tincture of envy, but sincerely rejoiced in your prosperity, and was even proud of your bearing your faculties so meekly.

There is now a Miss Douglas from America here, — quite a character, — of whom I have much to tell some time or other. Her faults are too obvious; she never concealed any thing in her life, nor indeed had much to conceal: but her good qualities are sincerity, candour, a perfect sunshine of good humour, and, what does not always accompany it, a sweet and even temper. She is charitable and benevolent, has strong religious feelings, and the simplicity of a child. She has a profound admiration of talent, and, like all other Americans, loves title: but she is the humblest creature I know, and bears reproof with the greatest

meekness. Lady Liston begged I would bring Miss D. to Millburn to introduce her. I said we would come to breakfast, that being the mode in which Sir Robert and she see their friends, at present. We were most gladly received, Miss D. making herself very entertaining with anecdotes of their mutual American friends. We spent two hours in their gardens, which are very fine, and at present in transcendent beauty.

Miss Douglas greatly wished to see Mr. Henry Mackenzie*: there, too, our visit appeared very acceptable. We found the family at a fine old gentleman-like place called Old Hailles, three miles west of Edinburgh. They went there to nurse their daughter Hope, a lovely, meek creature, much resembling my Isabella, — little known in the world, but very dear to her family. Mrs. Mackenzie, with the soundest sense, great conversational talents, and manners that would grace a court, has lived much retired, devoting her whole time and thoughts to her family, yet always receiving the best company. Every one thought it a privilege to be admitted to share their slight evening refreshments, where crowds never came, and where ease and good breeding took away the restraint which intellectual superiority sometimes creates. You must be tired; I cannot help it; I could only give you what I had, and my mind was full of the subject.

My cousin, C. Stewart, has come to town for a medical consultation; she returns on Monday, and will bring this letter as far as Glasgow: but I fear

* Author of the "Man of Feeling," and other well-known works.

she will too soon re-appear. I am very much affected by her state, but earnestly hope it will work a desirable change in a powerful and generous, but ill-regulated mind. I remain yours, affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXI.

TO MRS. HOOK, MOSELEY, NEAR BIRMINGHAM.

Edinburgh, 1st August, 1828.

My very dear Friend,

Still more endeared by the affliction which presses so heavily upon you. I thought, when your deprivation happened, that, after the first pangs were over,—after all those nearest to you had offered their tribute of condolence, — after you had felt yourself settled under the roof of that excellent son who was born to be a blessing to you in every sense of that comprehensive word; — when all this was past, I thought I should feel a melancholy satisfaction in writing much and often to you. Yet it is not so. I have trodden, with aching heart and bleeding feet, the dark and thorny path on which you have now entered. I feel, in this instance, as selfish as others whom I have despised for being so: thinking of you, which I do much and often, opens up so many of my own heart's wounds, that all my own painful pilgrimage seems to pass in review.

I have witnessed (and I am thankful to say it) much of that tender and constant affection between

pairs that seemed made to be blessings to each other; but any thing like your idolatry I never beheld: I have often thought of it with fear, thinking from the delicacy of your frame, and the acuteness of your feelings, that you were less fit than any one to submit with due resignation to a deprivation like this. Your known piety was the only resource I found, when sadly anticipating the blow, which has furnished a new incentive to seek happiness where alone it can be found.

I have lately made an intimate acquaintance with one who, in the extreme tenderness and purity of heart, and her total self-devotion to her duties and affection,—in short, in the whole frame and constitution of her mind, resembles you more than any one I have ever known. I use that word though I never saw her; yet she speaks of me and alludes to me more than once. It is Mrs. Huntington, the widow of a clergyman in Boston, North America: it is only about three years since she died. Whatever difference is between you and her is merely owing to external circumstances: she, too, made an idol of her husband, and was by him idolised. I have made quite a study of her letters, and always find in them some new charm; the language—pure, elegant, and simple—is worthy of the seraphic mind which dictated it. Hear her, page 261.:—"I have perceived an alteration in my mind ever since that bitter bereavement, that closed for ever one of the deepest channels through which the tide of my affections rolled upon the creature, —an alteration which I should think very natural,—a more ardent attachment to other friends than when

I had a husband to love;—this, I say, seems natural. An affectionate heart must love something; and oh! most wretched is the being, who, accustomed to bestow on one object all the strength of an ardent, generous attachment, can find nothing, on the removal of that object, to excite and diffuse its exercise again! Though God ought to occupy the chasm left within by those who, perhaps, occupied too large a space in our hearts, He does not require us to love Him only; and as we are social creatures, it is a mercy that we can feel the soothing glow of affection transferred in some measure from one to many, if we can love that one no longer. God has made us so, and I bless him for it. Who could live having such a stream stopped now and for ever? Yes, my dear friend, I love you more than I used to do, and am not jealous lest that affection should not all be reciprocated; and this experience is not observed to you only, but also to others."* I wish you much to be acquainted with this fine mind,—there is something so ethereal about her; I wish I could send you the book. She has been removed from this scene of trial: how justly in her case might we say, "Blessed are the dead." Adieu, dear friend; and believe me, with the tenderest sympathy and the truest affection, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

* "Memoirs of Mrs. Huntington." Reprinted at Edinburgh.

LETTER CCCXII.

TO A FRIEND, IN THE UNITED STATES, AMERICA.

Blackford House, near Edinburgh,
12th September, 1828.

My dear Friend,

I have written to you before; I refer to that letter, which I hope has arrived. I had then just returned to town from visiting some attached and excellent friends in the immediate neighbourhood, to whom I owe much for sympathy and kindness. In former years the strong ties of early attachment, which bind me to the Highlands and the West of Scotland, prevented me from taking advantage, in my short intervals of leisure, of the invitations of many who have villas in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, and who pity and, I hope, esteem me. Some were in their early days brought up with me, and would very much wish to soften my afflictions in every possible way; and I thank the Author of every good thing that I do feel soothed by their kindness, especially as they knew so well, and loved so much those whom I must ever silently lament; for there are few to whom I speak of what I have, to my own surprise, survived: when I do allude to the past, it is to those who knew them, and shared my sorrow.

* * * * * *

I would not have your friend Mary* back if I could recall her with a wish; but she has left the world very empty to me. The charm of her conversation cannot be recalled or replaced: we were like sisters, living so

* Her lately deceased daughter.

long in the same atmosphere, surrounded by worth, intelligence, and affection. All the events of past life were pictured on each other's minds; and there was a rich legacy of love divided between us from the blessed dead. It would be unjust and ungrateful in me to quit this theme without doing justice to my son's unwearied attention; every one says he is like a daughter to me; certainly his pure morals, domestic habits, and watchful affection, are blessings to my wounded spirit. I thought to write more of her that loved you so well, and many other matters, but I am too near town, and constantly followed and broken in upon. I am the less concerned about writing much now, because your friends the N.'s have so lately seen me, and I have seen them, and they will tell you about me. I must now bid you unwillingly farewell. Believe me, more than ever, yours, most truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXIII.

TO MISS MERCER, CHESTERFIELD, DERBYSHIRE.

Blackford House, near Edinburgh,
24th September, 1828.

My dear Friend,

I have been hoping to hear from or of you, and thinking of you every day. These thoughts took at length the form of a resolution to write you a long letter, cramming in every thing that I thought could amuse or interest you, so that you might have a pennyworth for your penny. This resolution has too

long delayed my writing; for a long letter is now become to me something formidable. But, as I have no other way of expressing the strong affection and warm esteem which time seems rather to increase, I shall try to soothe a languid hour by my own little history of the season.

You may believe I frequently pay the tax on old age in the loss of much valued old friends. But Providence mingles blessings in the bitter cup allotted to me: I was never so much the object of the most endearing kindness and general sympathy. Many of the young people who lived with me formerly, and who, from the pressure of care and sorrow, had nearly faded from my recollection, — these good creatures rally about me with filial regard, as if willing to supply, as far as possible, the loss of those children whom they esteemed so much. Some of those in the neighbourhood, and other cordial friends, were most anxious that I should pass what I could of the season with them. You did not know the worthy Mores. Mr. More* is an advocate, of great abilities, in high practice, with an excellent wife, warm-hearted like himself and truly pious, as indeed both are, with all the cheerfulness of a happy temperament and a heart and conscience at ease. Just as my son and I were parting, — he setting out on his Swedish tour, and I giving orders for a carriage, — Mr. More drove up to the door to take me to Viewfield, their pretty villa near Dalkeith. I had been long engaged to pass part of the month of August, if I did not go north, with

* J. S. More, Esq., now Professor of Scotch Law in the University of Edinburgh (1843).

Mrs. Young, who, under the name of Miss Gerard, formerly lived with me. She is most happily, and what the world calls fortunately, married, and has taught her husband to regard her early friend as she does herself. They live in summer at Dryden Bank, a beautiful sylvan retreat opposite to Roslin and Hawthornden, where I spent a few pleasant days, and then returned for a short time to the Mores. I shall always look back with satisfaction on the time spent among those worthies. Their happiness, though pure and hallowed by the feelings and principles by which they are actuated, cannot long continue to flourish so fair; they drink from so full a cup that it must needs run over. There are calamities from which neither their worth nor their affluence can shield them; but they cannot be embittered by remorse, and every thing else is supportable.

Soon afterwards I came out here to fulfil a long engagement to visit Miss Trotter, of Mortonhall, with whose stately form, and firm, energetic, high-principled character, you are already acquainted. She is indeed a most respectable curiosity: considering her age, it is really wonderful what a lively and increasing concern she takes in me; you would wonder at the anxiety she shows to have me come out to stay with her. You may judge that her connexions among the old aristocracy are not few. When I visit her, she generally asks two or three ladies to meet me,—always people of mind and intellect, for she "canna be fashed" with any other. Her set of visiters are people that you would like much; and when one is called away by engagements, she directly replaces her with another.

I have never been able to stay so long with her as now, so I have seen a greater variety of characters with her. She regulates her house and table in a manner peculiar to herself, with much simplicity, but great neatness and sufficiency—fruit, poultry, every thing growing on her own farm, well dressed, and excellent of their kind. I must now conclude, and shall be most impatient to hear from you: pray do let it be soon, and relieve the anxiety of your faithful and much attached friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXIV.

TO MRS. HOOK, MOSELEY, BIRMINGHAM.

Edinburgh, 2d February, 1829.

My dear Friend,

You wonder at my long silence, and so do I; indeed, I feel the delay a kind of reproach. All our sins punish themselves, but none grate on my feelings so much as a sin against long-tried and highly-valued friendship: I have derived so much comfort from it under difficulties and sorrows, the amount of which none ever knew, that I have great reason to value it as the cordial of life. Yet this pause of silence has not been one of forgetfulness; I think of you very often, and do for you what I have ever done for myself,—that is, instead of dwelling on the recollection of past sufferings, and the tearing asunder of ties unspeakably tender, I have found solace in the contemplation of the Divine goodness,—of those gleams of

mercy which were ever breaking through the darkest cloud, and of the high honour vouchsafed to me, in being the parent of so many beings whose spotless lives, and humble piety, left the assurance of their being heirs of a blessed immortality.

My health was a good deal shaken last winter, yet I have no reason to complain: considering my age, and the wear and tear to which I have been subjected, my long-continued enjoyment of that blessing is next to miraculous. If life could be protracted by the warmest and most enduring — I might almost say filial—affection, all this I receive. The attachment of the young people who were formerly under my care is beyond all praise, and really honourable to human nature. With the most delicate and unwearied attention, they frequently come to see me; and seem to think it a duty to do all in their power to replace the departed. Many, whom I have known to be far more deserving than myself, have had cause to complain, in the course of a troublous and agitated life, of selfishness and ingratitude; I have not met with any thing of the kind: every one I met seemed disposed to treat me with favour and indulgence. This has had the natural effect of making me think kindly of my fellow-creatures: instead of the apathy, tinctured with distrust, which I think one of the worst results of long and sad experience of life, my youthful feelings of benevolence are rather strengthened than diminished; I nourish them by contemplation of those virtues of which we now and then meet examples so fair and precious. I have had a high enjoyment of this kind in reading the published memoirs of Lord

Collingwood and Sir Thomas Munro, who each finished their shining course by a sublime and hallowed sacrifice of their lives to their respective duties. You have most probably read those works, which I regard as the Catholics do their legends of saints.

I very much wonder that I do not hear more of Lady Charlotte Bury: she was expected to pass the winter in Edinburgh; and her staying so long in the west country seems a proof that her most amiable daughter-in-law has made their residence agreeable to her and to Mr. Bury. Lady Charlotte is particularly happy in her family; Adelaide is the object of admiration and the highest esteem to every one in that country: her attendance on Lady —— in the last period of her disorder was more like that of one of the Sisters of Mercy of whom we hear on the Continent, than what one could expect of a delicate young lady. Since that time she has been an unspeakable comfort to Lord J. in the direction of his family and the management of his children. I am much interested in him, and delighted to hear he derives so much consolation from the society of his niece and of his very promising children.

As I was preparing to set out for the country, last autumn, I was agreeably surprised by a visit from Professor and Mrs. Norton, of Harvard College, in North America. The latter I found a beautiful and graceful woman, with manners easy and elegant, indicative of good sense and good taste; the Professor is a handsome man, in the prime of life, animated and imaginative, with nothing American but a slight intonation. I have rarely seen so fine a couple. We met, not as new acquaintance, but as old friends; but

it was like a short bright vision, — they were obliged to leave town soon, and so was I. Since their return to America I have received a very characteristic letter from them, accompanied by the American edition of Mrs. Hemans's Poems.

Now I hope you will not merely welcome but wonder at this melange. I think I have not written so much to one person for a long time, nor is it likely I ever shall again. I have a second sight of you and Walter and Georgiana coming down to Scotland, some bright summer or mild autumn. But you must be sure to come before my eyes are too dim to see you, or my ears too dull to hear. The almond-tree is not yet in full blossom, nor is the grasshopper (nor the pen) become a burden; but those days are drawing near, and I would wish to receive from you one draught of the wine of life before they come. Receive my son's best regards; and believe your affectionate friend to be always, very truly, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXV.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 21st April, 1829.

My dear Friend,

Very many thanks for your most agreeable letter, and the desirable intelligence of your son's approaching marriage which it conveys. I admire the cordial, generous pleasure you express at an event

which, however desirable in itself, must make some degree of separation from a son so excellent and so devoted to his mother. I am certain Walter will be the best of husbands: if he does not unite himself to the very best of wives I fear he will make too good a husband; that is, the cordial tenderness of his kindly nature will scarcely keep the balance even. There must be a preponderance somewhere, which is best on the right, that is the masculine side; and if this point is not made clear at first, the assumption of "vested rights" will be felt as no pleasing novelty. I am in two respects different from many others: though born a plebeian, I am in my opinions a decided aristocrat,—lamenting over the decline of every ancient family, and never seeing an old estate advertised in the newspapers without a pang. Then, though a woman, I cannot without pain see in matrimony any female usurpation: I prefer, in these cases, a limited monarchy, much like our own, where the monarch is possessed of certain prerogatives, which he rarely uses,—never but in cases of necessity, and those very urgent.

I should have written sooner to express my satisfaction with Walter's marriage, were it not that my time has been much engrossed by my attendance on a guest who is at present indisposed and afflicted. She is a Mrs. Gorman from Ireland, sister to the Chief Justice Bushe,—a very gentle and cultivated person, with a good deal of Irish enthusiasm: I knew her brother here several years ago. The comfort of being able, without inconvenience, to receive a friend in this way is very consoling under all my privations,

and after all my painful struggles to preserve my independence. Tell Walter, with my love, that I rejoice in his joy, and do not despair of his introducing his Delicia to me before I depart; and believe that I shall always be, as I have long been, yours, most truly and affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXVI.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 14th July, 1829.

My dear Friend,

I begin by acknowledging the receipt of your parcel and your book.

* * * * * * *

Notwithstanding my late indisposition and the interruptions I have been liable to, I have, with painful accuracy and deep attention, worked my way through Captain Hall's three volumes of Travels in North America. I was prepared, not only by letters from my friends in New York and Boston, but by some of their best-bred and best-informed natives who have just left us, to expect from Captain Hall an overgrown lampoon. But I have diligently studied him (carefully omitting his mechanics and metaphysics), and the result is, that my rational powers were agreeably exercised in the perusal of so much sense and truth, and my best feelings gratified by so unstudied a display of indulgence and benevolence. When you

and I sleep in the dust, Captain Hall's fame will spread with the accomplishment of his predictions. I like the manly candour he shows, and the happy manner in which the best elements of aristocracy — its polish and its honourable elevation of sentiment — are mingled with the strength and simplicity of his pure but unadorned style. The national pride and vanity of the Americans about their country far exceeds Nebuchadnezzar's; but, before the advent of Mr. Irving's Millennium, they will learn by experience that pride goeth before a fall.

A friend lately sent me Mr. Story's memoir of Isabella Campbell, which I have read with attention, and I may add, with much respect for the pure and pious feelings which predominate through it. I would touch all that belongs to the sanctuary with reverential awe; and, though I do not much approve of seeing the world invited to view the whole anatomy of a highly excited and youthful mind, lodged in a frail and feverish frame, it is too nice a question for me to decide, whether the good of such an example of early and fervent piety, so minutely delineated, may overbalance the evil of the obvious resemblance which the whole bears to many Popish legends of St. Clara and St. Teresa, whose piety gave light and renown to their respective nunneries; thus opening a door of ridicule not easily closed. I do think the memoir rather diffuse and monotonous, but am very glad so much money was raised, by means of it, for a necessitous family.

The greatest worldly comfort I have at present is the society of the excellent Miss G.'s; they have their

carriage too, which will be much to me when I am able to use it. But I am interrupted, and must break off. With best regards to all, I am yours, most affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXVII.

TO A FRIEND IN THE UNITED STATES, AMERICA.

Edinburgh, 16th July, 1829.

My dear Friend,

I do not know that the non-arrival of a hurried scrawl I sent you, containing the mere dregs of a worn-out mind, is much to be regretted, yet I know you will regret the loss of a letter from me, however little worth in itself. I am daily rendered sensible of the failure of a memory once comprehensive, and still, in some painful instances, too faithful. If you have missed the letter, you have at any rate seen several very happy specimens of your population, who could tell you that, though I am a little lame and a good deal deaf and antique, I am by no means dumb, and can talk with wonted fluency to people I like upon subjects that please me.

You must not be shocked when I tell you that I am not shocked at Captain Hall's work on America, which I understand is very unpopular in your country. I have always been jealous for the honour of America, yet I do not think it at all advanced by that voracious greed of praise which seems to expect

applause, unbounded and unceasing, for all that exists, or that is done or doing, in America. Eve says very sensibly to her morning visiter, —

> "Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt
> The virtues of the fruit."

We are all inclined to regard with admiration the Hercules who shows such precocity in his cradle; but there would be no harm in his looking now and then into the hole from whence he was digged, and to the advantages he possessed over all other new people in the rich inheritance of ancestral wisdom, of language, literature, and institutions as yet unrivalled. This was a noble stock to begin with; the lines, too, had fallen to him in pleasant places; and he had ample room and verge enough to luxuriate in the abundance of a new and fertile soil. His *amor patriæ* is not only pardonable but praiseworthy; but he should permit other people also to love their country, and prefer its institutions and manners, and bear, without violent wrath, to hear Captain Hall express those feelings and sentiments which are natural to an independent man, and habitual to a high-bred gentleman. I am much satisfied with his description of Boston, and have read over with delight his description of the village of Lowell, of which none of my friends ever told me.

Last winter was a melancholy one to me; so many of my relations and cotemporaries were carried off that I began to feel as if "Sister spirit, come away," were whispering in my ears. My health is now better, but my strength and memory are not what they were. I hope to be enabled to wait my

appointed time, as a person long tried with suffering ought to do, with trembling hope; for of that full assurance that people talk of I have no comprehension. I am, dear friend, much and affectionately yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXVIII.

TO MRS. HOOK, LEAMINGTON, WARWICKSHIRE.

Meadowside, near Glasgow,
26th August, 1829.

My dear Friend,

I have for some time been very anxious to know what step you would take, and where you would establish yourself, after the marriage of your son; but my anxiety in this respect was in some degree quieted by Lady Charlotte Bury. I saw her several times while she was in Edinburgh: you may well believe we spoke much and often of you and yours. She is certainly much changed in appearance, though her charming manners, all ease and simplicity, are unchanged. I saw little of Mr. Bury, whose health seems not to be good, and who is moreover much engaged preparing some publication, the subject of which I believe is connected with the fine arts. From my infirmity I could not often visit her; once, however, I went by particular desire in a chair to meet a very small party, the ornament of which was Sir Walter Scott. I saw many of Mr. Bury's drawings, which Lord Ruthven, the first of judges, and

himself an artist, called very fine. The little Blanche is truly a fine child, though extremely delicate-looking. I have a young relation who lives with me, who, while Lady C. was sitting with me, used to walk with Blanche to the garden to gather flowers, and entertained me with repeating some of her sensible remarks. She is a child I could be very fond of; I am only sorry that this fair flower appears so fragile.

I had a charming guest before I left town to come here,—no other than the very charming Mrs. Hemans, for whom I have long felt something very like affection. She had two fine boys with her, the objects, visibly, of very great tenderness, who seem equally attached to her. She is entirely feminine, and her language has a charm like that of her verse,—the same ease and peculiar grace, with more vivacity. If affliction had not laid a heavy hand upon her she would be playful: she has not the slightest tinge of affectation, and is so refined, so gentle, that you must both love and respect her. She, and Southey, and your own dear self are the only persons, whom I previously drew pictures of, who have not disappointed me. This is very ancient enthusiasm, you may think; but some things will occur that bring back youthful feelings.

I am now, for the last time I think, paying a visit to Mrs. Smith, my old friend of fifty years' standing, with whom I have always passed some weeks every year. But I must now go home, for next week my son goes to Wales for his holydays. Love to Georgiana; teach her to love me, and write very soon to your attached and faithful friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXIX.

TO MRS. FRANCIS BOOTT, GOWER STREET, BEDFORD SQUARE, LONDON.

Blackford House, Edinburgh,
28th October, 1829.

My dear Mrs. Boott,

This letter will be sent to you by Miss Douglas, who will tell you how very agreeably I have spent part of this autumn in visiting Mrs. Smith, the only one remaining (with the exception of her excellent sister Mrs. Brown) of my early, very early friends. I meant it as a farewell visit.

Mrs. Smith is just of my age, and may truly be accounted a saint, drawing near the end of a most prosperous and singularly well-spent life. The morning of her day was somewhat overclouded, but ever since, till the death of her excellent husband, which happened a few years ago, her life has been one continued period of felicity,—so constantly influenced by a strict sense of duty in all she says and does, so humble amidst the highest worldly prosperity, loved with more than filial affection by the best and the most esteemed children, and possessing the power to give, which to me would be the first of blessings: then there is a freshness, a sweet simplicity in her countenance which belongs to no other old woman. When I speak with reverence of Mrs. Smith's superiority of desert, I do so because I know that her spirit of humility, and her unchanging steadiness of character, have been more severely tried than that of any person I know.

I, again, was under a perpetual check; the weeds were never suffered to spring up, the scythe was in perpetual action. All the flowers of fancy, on the possession of which I had been flattered, were blasted by early calamity: death met me in all my walks; poverty threatened, though it did not conquer me; voices from the tomb seemed to instruct me in my duty; and every one around me showed an example of piety, truth, and kindness. What a wretch should I have been, thus chastened and taught, if I had not sought earnestly to do my humble duty. But sure I am, that, if I had been in her place, my light-hearted negligence (to say no more) would, without a protecting angel on constant duty, have betrayed me into some of those errors which prove snares to the prosperous. . . . . .

Tell Dr. Boott that my conscience is quite at rest as to honouring his American introductions: they were really very agreeable, intelligent people. Pray let me know how he likes Captain Basil Hall's Travels. I long for his opinion; and am, very truly, his and yours in haste, but with great regard,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXX.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Brae House, Edinburgh,
5th December, 1829.

My dear Friend,

After so many years of attachment unbroken, and so often expressed with all the warmth of sincere feeling, you must not wonder though an exhausted and care-worn mind sometimes indulges the indolence of age. When I do so, it is more my own loss than that of my remaining correspondents; for though I begin a letter with reluctance, I kindle as I proceed, and always look back on the day on which I do not write as a dull one. I do think the intercourse I thus continue with persons I have long loved and valued has a tendency to prolong my life, that is, the best part of life—the exercise of kindly affections, and the desire to please and be pleased. I consider it as daring, even in thought, to murmur at the prospect of any mode of existence, which it pleases the Almighty to allot as the closing scene of a protracted life. If the heart retains its wonted feelings, if the fancy sheds its tremulous light on the edge of the grave, we should be peculiarly grateful for a blessing which diffuses a happy influence on all around us. Nay, though we die before our death to all that makes life lovely, still we gain in tranquillity what we lose in enjoyment. When we are deprived of the pleasures of memory, when all we loved and all we mourned fades from recollection, we cease to suffer those acute pangs that wound us in secret, when to the world we appear

serene and easy. All things relative to us are wisely and well ordered; and He whose power has supported us, and whose mercy has shed blessings through life, will not forget us in its close if we have diligently sought Him.

Your last letter affords me much satisfaction: your disposition is by no means querulous, yet your feelings were in one instance not well regulated, and your excessive indulgence of them, in that instance, made me fear that, when deprived of that prime blessing of your life, you would scarcely set the full value on the many that remain. You certainly worshipped an idol whose presence you were not likely to enjoy long, and whose departure would have made you, without the aid of religion, utterly wretched. Suffer you must and will while memory holds her seat; but then the serene evening of a well-spent life still has many enjoyments for you.

I have heedfully perused the sketch of your beloved Dean's life and character, contained in the Annual Obituary. What is said of him I know to be strictly true; and these truths are expressed with warmth and elegance worthy of the subject. Of his talents, his accomplishments, his singular purity of mind, his genuine modesty and disinterestedness, I thought very justly in thinking very highly; but I considered that, through extreme modesty, he had not done justice to his abilities, in allowing them to lie dormant in some instances where their full exertion would have increased his reputation, and proved serviceable to others. I was surprised, however, to find how very much he had done in this way, of which I

had no conception till I saw the list of his publications. I think that if this was properly represented to His Majesty, the family of so able and efficient an advocate of loyalty and the constitution would not be neglected, especially as this faithful servant of the public carried his disregard of worldly advantages rather to the extreme. This is the more to be lamented, as those fine spirits, that think least of worldly interests, are the very persons who feel most acutely the inconvenience resulting from the neglect of them. Yet a want of worldly anxiety does not leave so painful an impression on the mind as over-care about the dross that perisheth. I read a memoir of the Bishop of Winchester in the same Obituary, and was quite shocked to find that he left two hundred thousand pounds. I do not easily reconcile myself to dignitaries of the church leaving much wealth; so much is expected from them, that a man must really close his heart and his hand to enable him to lay up much.

I always understood your new abode, Leamington, to be a very pleasant place; and it obviously attracts pleasant people to it as a residence. Tossed about as I have been through life, I always find in my respective homes something to like that I am unwilling to leave. The great attraction in Prince's Street was the Castle, with the rude grandeur of the rock, and its military music, that seemed to descend from the clouds. I am equally near it here, but then it has a different appearance than when seen in front. I must now close this long letter; and, with love to Georgiana, believe me affectionately, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXI.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 17th February, 1830.

I think it would be a pity that you should leave Meadowside now, when spring, with its early buds and snowdrops, is so near: from that time till the end of May there are so many beauties daily unfolding; and it is the last year in which you can see flowers bloom that are *your very own.*

Miss Bannerman's* departure was a blow much felt: her integrity and sound principle commanded my esteem, her intelligence amused, and her eloquence delighted me, and her little irritations never disturbed me but on her own account. Perhaps from east to west there were not two people who formed a greater contrast than she and my worthy Mrs. Hall; yet they knew and esteemed each other, as genuine, sterling people always do. Miss B., with all her high intellectual powers, valued, indeed revered, the sterling worth and humble piety of her whose whole life was one continued exercise of patience, forbearance, and charity in its most extensive sense. Mrs. Hall, again, was no enlightened judge of mental qualities, yet had of such a generous admiration, far beyond the scope of ordinary minds, especially when accompanied, as in Miss Bannerman, with stern uprightness and religious principle.

* See Letter to Mrs. Smith, dated 7th Sept., 1824.

I wish you would read at leisure, and with patient attention, the "Natural History of Enthusiasm." I have been delighted, and I hope benefited by it; but in case you should think our verdict insufficient, I can assure you that Dr. Chalmers very much approves of it. I would have you begin it like a Hebrew book—reading the end first; I mean the two last sections or chapters. I also recommend the perusal of it strongly to your daughter, who inherits much of her father's clear head and sound judgment.

Since the departure of the excellent companion of your life, for whom I really mourned bitterly, I have not, out of my own family, felt a blow like the death of my friend General Stewart of Garth, the late Governor of St. Lucia. Last July he wrote me a very long letter, with an account of his island, and his plans for improving it. In the "North Briton" of to-day you may read the annals of a brave, good man, whose memory is dear to me: whoever wrote this sketch is master of his subject, makes no blunders, nor does by any means exaggerate. The real General Stewart was very different from the apparent one: no greater proof of the power of genuine worth and useful talents could exist than the universal respect paid to his virtues in this frivolous, Frenchified period,—when manner and appearance are every thing,—and his commanding this universal esteem under the disadvantages of a very plain exterior and ungraceful utterance.

I must now conclude, without telling you of two most welcome guests, who have accidentally met here, from different countries, to pay me what I suppose

they consider as a last visit. Of these I could say much; but at present can only say that I am much and truly yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXII.

TO MRS. HOOK, LEAMINGTON, WARWICKSHIRE.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 1st March, 1830.

I should have answered your questions before I acknowledged the intended favour — for I really account it such — of sending me Mr. Forster's Vindication of the Christian Religion, and exposure of the errors of the Mahometan Faith.* What is said in this vindication, and what is quoted from others of the most pious and learned individuals who have perused the work, has much excited my interest in it. I have gathered, from a diligent perusal of an article in the Quarterly Review, a little further insight into the nature of the work.

Far from joining those fools who "rush in where angels fear to tread," I never had the desire to be wise beyond what is written. At the same time, though I approached the Oracles of Truth with deep and habitual reverence, and with full conviction that the Charter of our salvation contained every thing that was necessary for unlearned Christians, in this preparatory state, to know, I never doubted that those who believed what they understood, and reverenced what they did not,

* "Mahometanism Unveiled." By the Rev. C. B. Forster, B.D., Chaplain to the Bishop of Limerick. 2 vols. 1829.

would have clearer light vouchsafed to them hereafter. Metaphysics were quite beyond me; the only book of the kind that I ever read was "Butler's Analogy:" that, indeed, I studied many years since with the greatest attention, and, I hope, not without profit. I was much urged, by an admirer of his style, to read Gibbon, the only infidel work I ever looked into. For real history the style appeared to me too brilliant and ornate; I did not get through one half of the first volume, feeling continual disgust and irritation at the sneering insinuations of an author "willing to wound, but yet afraid to strike," at the vitals of Christianity. I had always a very painful feeling of the pretence afforded to avowed infidels, and to many that were not so, but were mere triflers with truth, by the wide diffusion of palpable darkness over those extensive regions in Asia and part of Europe where Islamism, and a far more debased system of idolatry, appeared to mere human view so rooted, so inflexible. Often have I been tempted to cry—

> "When shall truth the veil remove,
> When shall light the scene improve?"

And it grieved me to think what a pretext this deep dark cloud afforded to infidel writers and talkers, the great misleaders of youth, who held unlimited sway in Edinburgh when I came to reside here twenty years ago.

The first relief that my mind received from this painful feeling for injured truth was from Bishop Heber's Journal of his travels in India, which, with all its other attractions, affords abundant proof of the

great work of Christianizing India having happily begun, and of the probability of its sure though slow progress hereafter. It appears, from his statement, that the proud Mahometans there have their hearts more indurated against the truth than the gentler Hindoos; no doubt from a kind of spiritual pride in that kind of distorted Theism which they have borrowed and disfigured with their own fables. But in this work of Mr. Forster's I shall have pleasure in seeing what I have long wished — a successful attempt to "justify the ways of God to man."

Why did you not tell me of your nephew Gilbert Matheson's Travels in South America? They are excellent, and make me know more than all I have heard and read of that country. Let me hear from you soon, my dear friend; and believe me, always, your affectionate

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXIII.

TO MISS MERCER, CLIFTON, BRISTOL.

My dear Miss Mercer, Edinburgh, 17th March, 1830.

Age, Ossian says, is dark and unlovely. Not always, I hope; but I find one of its most unlovely results is the reluctance one feels to write even to those most loved and esteemed. I could scarcely believe that so kind and satisfactory a letter as your

last should remain so long unanswered; but I may say with poor Leyden —

> "My soul is sad, for I have heard
> The steps of the departing year."

Among others whom I little thought to outlive are General Stewart of Garth, my worthy and most primitive and original friend Mrs. Hall, and Miss Bannerman, with all her true piety, strong attachments, pure and fervent eloquence, high talents, and unbending, often unwelcome sincerity. All of these have lately gone. The General I should most likely never have seen again; but of the other long attached and faithful friends I feel a daily want.

I see Mrs. Henry Erskine now and then; she is in mind and affection an evergreen scarce equalled. W. is the name of the gentleman who is to marry Miss E. I like all that I hear of him very well, with one exception, that he is said to have no profession, and too fine a mind, too much taste and imagination for the dry study of the law. Now, if he had known me, and been captivated with my perfections, I would positively refuse him for that very reason. A man who, without a very independent fortune, should sit down content with the idle elegance of what he supposes a fine mind, would appear to me a kind of intellectual coxcomb. I beg the gentleman's pardon, and yours, for I have taken it into my head he must be a favourite of yours. My spirit was much refreshed by Margaret Fletcher's marriage. Independent as she was both in mind and circumstances, I could never suppose her making a

marriage in any one sense inferior. John Davy* I have known for many years; I saw him often when he studied in Edinburgh. In saying that I think him worthy of her, I pay him the highest possible compliment.

Now, I am going to introduce to you a lady, a sort of Scoto-American, Miss Harriet Douglas, whom you must like and esteem; though her manners are abundantly Transatlantic, yet a more candid, sincere, and pure-minded person does not exist; she is really made of generosity and good nature, and artless as a child. She will interest you by telling you about us and Edinburgh; and she will tell you, better than I can, the tragical fate of her mother, who came over to see her last year, and died immediately on her arrival at Liverpool. The eldest daughter, who accompanied her, has decidedly consumptive symptoms, and has been ordered to Clifton. You are too deeply read in that chapter of calamity, and can tell Miss D. how her patient should be treated. You like to do good, and here you can do it essentially to the wealthy poor, this being a case which wealth cannot reach. My son's best regards attend you, and the sincere love of your affectionate

ANNE GRANT.

* John Davy, Esq. M.D., brother to the late Sir Humphry Davy, Bart.

LETTER CCCXXIV.

TO MRS. HOOK, CLARENDON SQUARE, LEAMINGTON.

Edinburgh, 29th March, 1830.

My dear Friend,

I reproached myself much for being so long in answering your last letter, and thanking you for your most acceptable present. I wished to peruse it hastily, to tell you what I thought of it; but I can no longer write at night, and am oppressed with visiters in the morning. I have, however, a sad and urgent call upon all my sympathy in the loss of your kind, generous, and talented brother*, the dearest on earth to you except your own children and Eliza. This must have been an unexpected blow; yet the same powerful Arm which has supported you under the greatest of all possible calamities, will yet, I trust, be stretched forth to aid you under this new and deep affliction. One bereavement indeed prepares for another. We look forward with horror and anguish to the very possibility of events which appear to us altogether insupportable: they come; we suffer much indeed; but the Power that inflicts the wound strengthens us, first to endure, and then to submit. We thus have a dear-bought lesson of patience and humility; we find we must learn to live without those whom we thought it impossible to live without, — that we have still cares and duties remaining, — and that by mourning to excess for the departed we

* The late Sir Robert Townshend Farquhar, Bart.

should injure the living, and destroy whatever portion of strength and capacity remained to us. Where our earthly props sink under us we are driven for refuge to a Friend of whom death cannot deprive us, whose compassions fail not, and whose tender mercies are above all his other works.

I know not how it is with you, but I am quite aware that I myself leaned too fondly on this world, and was engrossed by cares and hopes and fears about my family, that really filled up all my mind, and took the place of what was infinitely more important to them and to me; I feel, in short, that all those severe chastisements were necessary to bring a wandering mind home to the great purpose for which we exist. We never have a deep and lasting impression of what our Saviour suffered for us till we drink of the wholesome though bitter draught allotted to us.

I hope this fine weather, and the sympathy you feel in each other's sorrow, will bring down our dear Eliza to you. Do let me know as soon as you can how you have been enabled to bear this heavy loss. Your brother's life was happy and honourable; he lived respected and beloved in the very sunshine of prosperity; and few have had so much enjoyment of life. He did not live to see the darkened evening of life, clouded, as it often is, by sickness and sorrow. Tell me much of him, and of the nature of his last illness. I can no more. God bless and support you, prays your affectionate friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXV.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 22d May, 1830.

My dear Friend,

You speak of a long letter and two books: I have got one book and no letter.

I saw a lady the other day lately returned from England, where she had seen Mrs. F. on her return from Paris. I was agreeably surprised to find that she was not so charmed with the Parisians as I thought she would be. The men appeared to her noisy and flippant, and, what is certainly very different from the old regime, negligent towards the women: as for the young ladies, they have nothing for it but modesty and silence, and must by no means consider themselves as parts of the company.

The clerical culprits from the west country are here; but it appears that if the General Assembly meddle with them at all, they will treat them tenderly. Dr. Johnson held an opinion (from which I should not incline to differ much) that such of the clergy as are deficient in morals do less injury to religion than those who inculcate erroneous tenets, because the evil of the first terminates in themselves, and is even here punished by the contempt and abhorrence of mankind; whereas a man that opens a new source of error, and is a zealot in proselytising others, has followers and admirers. I agree, too, with the majestic moralist that people think too lightly of the erroneous opinions of well-meaning persons, because opinion is

certainly the source of action. What I complain of now is, that in taste, morals, and I fear to say religion, there seems to be no fixed standard. There are now published so many new books, which every one must read and talk of, that the old sound divines and the English classics are neglected and forgotten. I can never persuade myself that the mind is not weakened by this wide and shallow diffusion.

I have just parted with one of the few remaining friends of my early days. This is Mrs. Likely, a childless widow, older than myself, but still alive to every thing that touches the heart and awakens the imagination; one who will die in due time, but will never grow old or by any means worldly. She sets out to-morrow for Banff. You could hardly believe how sorry I am for her departure. She has worked a worsted scarf in the Grant tartan for me as a parting gift. I am, dear friend, yours, affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXVI.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 14th June, 1830.

My very dear Friend,

Do not think unkindly of me that I did not, as I ought and meant to do, write immediately on receipt of poor dear Georgiana's letter. The delicacy of your frame, the difficult task in which you had been engaged, and the interruption of your pursuits,

aggravating physical suffering, — all hung heavy on my mind. Of my sympathy with your illness you could not doubt for a moment; and you have, in a still more trying crisis, experienced how far beyond expectation God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb. I therefore resolved, instead of mourning to you over an evil under which I found you were enabled to behave with admirable patience and equanimity, to use my best endeavours to amuse and occupy your mind. Sir Charles Forbes readily franks for me, and therefore I resolved as I could command (I mean cover) two sheets, that I would, as the king did to Johnny Armstrong, "write a large letter, and seal it with my hand;" which letter was to be critical, biographical, or playful, as the present time suggested,— any thing, in short, that might amuse the languor of confinement. But my time has of late been crowded with events and changes fatal to leisure, and to the fulfilment of my intention; I have had friends from Northumberland and the Highlands staying and going: the whole of my town friends have gone to the country, and paid their customary visits before their departure.

Perhaps I have not told you how I spend my day. It is, or rather they are, very monotonous, and I go out to visit very rarely; indeed I cannot afford it: sedan-chairs, my usual conveyance, would soon find their way to the bottom of my little charity purse. At this time of year I wake as usual very early, and read something not too interesting till six or seven o'clock,—then slumber for an hour. I can redeem a little time for the best purpose, but am always dressed and at the

breakfast-table by nine, to accommodate my son. We read the Bible only, before breakfast; afterwards I have a sacred half hour. Then I begin a letter, or write two or three pages in a manuscript which I shall leave behind me.* Afterwards come dependants. Could you dream of my having dependants, who have been all my life standing on the edge of the gulph of poverty without falling in; and this not because I had much worldly prudence, but because I made stern self-denial, and what Miss Edgeworth calls civil courage, serve me instead. Well, but my dependants want a letter to some one, or advice, or a governess' place, &c.; and my protegées have turned out so well that I have constant applications for such persons. I will not lead you through this gallery of humble though often meritorious characters, but proceed to my visiters, premising that I receive them free from the embarrassment of household cares; for my young relation, Mary Maccoll, who lives with me takes all that weight off me *con amore*, being happy to aid me in return for my attention to a motherless family, and the care I have taken to cultivate a clear strong understanding. Well then, many people come if the sun shines, because the day is good; and if it does not, because particular persons wish to see me alone on various pretences, some of which would amuse you, if I had leisure to explain them: there are a very few who have no motive but pure good will. Among all interruptions I make shift to begin a long letter or finish a short one, and to read a book. My son seldom comes from his office till past five; and I spend in good days an hour in the garden, where my visiters

* See note subjoined to Letter of 23d Dec., 1823.

join me in occupying a long seat. Then dinner at five, or a little past it; which is followed by that period betwixt dinner and tea, when I can never apply to any thing, and which would be drowsily wasted in languid half slumber if I had not taught Mary chess, of which, though no good player, I am very fond. Thus I prevent the sleep that would prevent my scanty share of rest at night. Tea is my only nectar, and never fails to refresh and invigorate me. In the evening I knit, and Mary reads to me, and perhaps I read to her by turns, for the sake of commenting. While my son goes to his office, two or three people sometimes drink tea and coffee with me. This is a sketch of the routine of our quiet life.

The two books which have most contributed to interest me of late are Bishop Heber's Indian Journal, and the Life of Sir Thomas Munro. The latter I knew personally: his sister, Mrs. Erskine, brought him to see me. He was by no means a drawing-room gentleman; but then he was something better. I knew Sir Thomas much better in his letters: very charming they were, and now form the gems of this publication. I had read, along with his sister, a series of them for thirty years. I do not think she showed them to above two or three persons besides out of her own family; not that she preferred me to many others, but that she thought no one else so thoroughly understood or appreciated them. I was pleased with the manly simplicity and purity of the style, and its occasional playfulness, and gratified by the views which the letters opened of the interior of India, such only as a gifted mind, communicating with another

of the highest class, could afford. I would have a myrtle and a palm planted by the grave of the Bishop, and overshadow that of the Governor with an oak and a laurel. I rejoice in seeing all his relatives brightening in his fame. There is a new edition publishing, which I hope will contain more of his incomparable letters.

I must break off. Let Georgiana tell me how your convalescence proceeds: I grieve you should so much resemble me in suffering; and must only add that I am, with truth and affection, yours, ever,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXVII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 19th August, 1830.

My dear Friend,

I do not like to write a short letter, being, like other old women, addicted to prosing, and very willing, like Dogberry, to bestow all my tediousness on my friends. To-day, however, I am much restricted, having been worn out with a succession of morning visiters.

Hurried as I am, I must tell you what happened to me yesterday. You must know I was induced to go, with Rosa Ilderton and Mary, to a public place. We had two or three more with us; and enjoyed it much, though, from first to last, there might have been four hundred people there at least. That you

may not be alarmed for my matronal decorum, I must tell that this was a show of fruits and flowers, exhibited by the gardeners in the Hopetoun Rooms. Ample and splendidly furnished, these rooms are the admiration of all strangers; and gay and beautiful they looked, with a vast profusion of flowers, disposed in the most fanciful forms imaginable; it was, on the whole, a happy combination of artificial splendour and natural beauty. I had no bonnet, but a very respectable cap; and, as I walked in from my sedan-chair, I was surprised to see another lady with exactly such crutches, and precisely such a shawl as my own. I looked with much interest at my fellow-cripple, which interest she seemed to reciprocate. She took her place in another room, equally large and splendid, and as gaily decorated as the one in which I was placed, but so open that I had a full view of it, and of her sitting a little behind me, with the very fellow-shawl to mine. Amidst all the flush of bloom before me, I often withdrew my attention to regard this withered flower with still-increasing interest; the more so, as that every time I turned to look, her eyes met mine, and at length, I thought, with a known and familiar expression; till, at last, I remarked it to those around me, and that I thought she would like to be introduced to me when the show was over. I thought, too, I had seen her somewhere; her figure was as ample as my own: but I comforted myself that I had a better face, hers being almost ugly. I rose at length, and so did she,—but I saw her no more.

Think of my mortification at having the laugh of the whole house against me on coming home. There

was no such room, and no such lady; large folding doors of looking-glass gave back the room as if it had been another, and the reflection of my own figure had deceived me. When I had been talking of this other lady they imagined it all playfulness, and never thought of the deception. This could scarcely have happened had I been familiar, like other people, with my own countenance; but I have actually not looked in a mirror for more than two years at least.

You are really the grandest of grandmothers. How people can spare love enough for such a wide distribution puzzles me: it is really virtuous in me neither to envy you your wide-spreading progeny, nor those youthful looks of which every one tells me.

Pray do enforce my last request to your son William. It is only about a fine young man, well brought up and well-disposed, who merely wants

> "A brother of the earth
> To give him leave to toil."

Now with regard to going westward, I am more unwieldy and awkward in my motions, more nervous and timorous than when I saw you last, and less inclined to exhibit my infirmities: however, see you once more I must; but more of this hereafter. I am, my dear old friend, very much yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXVIII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 29th October, 1830.

This postscript to my last letter is intended to give some idea of the crimes and miseries of godless and hapless France, which all the foolish and many of the impious things one hears, on the subject, force upon one's recollection. I was foolish enough to set about reading Madame Genlis' farrago of Autobiography, which derives a sort of consequence from the relation she bore to the tri-coloured King of the present hour. I really feel indignant at the folly and madness of female politicians, for the fatal effects of their interference with what does not belong to them. After mystifying us with forty pages of what Hotspur calls "skimble-scamble stuff," about the Duchess of Orleans' difference with her,—the main point being to show how entirely she influenced the worthless duke, and how little his excellent wife had to say to him,—the truth comes out that the real cause was her leading the wretched Duke into the very fury of Jacobinism. She shams and shuffles about it, but is forced to own what was too well known to be denied—that she carried the present King twice to the Jacobin club when he was sixteen years old. She hurries over very lightly the catastrophe of her infamous dupe, the father of this king; and, amongst the most frivolous subjects, she talks more of religion than any truly pious person ever did, by way of covering the disgrace of her

former intimacy with the philosophers. My American friend, Miss Douglas, dined in company with Madame Genlis in Paris, at the age of ninety, a year since.

In the midst of this characteristic melange of French levity and horror I was interrupted, just before dinner yesterday, by the arrival of a corrective to all this flippancy, in the form of a volume, partly written and partly edited by Dr. Jebb, Bishop of Limerick, which his lordship has been kind enough to send to me.* You will ask why this eminently learned and pious divine, whom I never saw, should thus distinguish me. He has had a severe paralytic stroke, and spends the winter at Leamington on account of his health. Mrs. Hook also resides there since the dean's death: they are neighbours and intimates; and specimens of my correspondence with her have led the good prelate to think me a much better person than I am, and consequently worthy of such a gift. Johnson very sagaciously observes, that one's letters are no sure criterion of character, as every one wishes to appear to advantage to their correspondents. This volume, as I told you, arrived just before dinner.

When the cloth had been just removed, there came, under an envelope, another volume, entitled "Scripture the Test of Character; being an Address to the influential Classes on the Effects of Example." The author's language is that of a well-educated person flaming with zeal, and talking of crimes and depravity, as Columbus might have done of his new world, as if the author had the merit of the discovery. I think that my new book tastes strongly of the Row heresy.

* "The Protestant Kempis; or, Piety without Asceticism."

Tell your son James, speaking of style, that his eulogium on the late Lord Blantyre, which I found in the newspaper, called tears from a source long dried up. Indeed, I was weeping ripe, before; and his doing such justice both to himself and the departed model of excellence touched me tenderly. I was, as your son is concerned, something like poor Madame Bonnet, when she grew old and childish. She had a niece, a fine modest girl, who conducted her dancing-class very well. Madame often burst into tears in the midst of her performance; and when asked what ailed her, she said, "I do cry for joy to see Rosalie dance so well." Adieu, dear friend: I am, most affectionately, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXIX.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 13th November, 1830.

My dear Friend,

I have had a kind of inkphobia for a fortnight past or more, for which I am angry at myself, thinking it a very heartless thing. I made myself believe it was quite necessary that I should finish a set of wine-rubbers this year, and entered so much into the petty spirit of this trivial industry, that I made it a pretext for leaving valuable letters from estimable friends unanswered. Now a letter is all the expression of gratitude I have to give to those to whom

I owe much in various ways; and I begin to reproach myself for neglecting to give my little all where I ought.

One very long and very well-meant letter I can never answer, for I shall never know whence it came; it consisted of eight closely-written pages. The purport was, to suggest that I lived too much in and for the world, and to offer wholesome advice with regard to my spiritual concerns. Conscience, that makes cowards of us all, told me in a loud whisper that all this was very right, and I was very wrong, forbidding me at the same time to criticise my unseen monitress, who, I believe, is no other than the authoress of the little volume which I send you as a curiosity. Robert Miller, the bookseller, told me this last was written by a lady whose name he was forbid to tell, looking at the same time very willing to be urged to disclose it: I told him he was very right to keep the secret.

The said Miller amused me the other day with an account of an interview he had with the clerical retinue of the ex-royal family of France. He had formerly known the king's confessor here, but had not a distinct notion of his added dignities, further than that he was Archbishop of Rheims. He called at Holyrood, and found a whole conclave of the priesthood. The prelate, after the kindest possible welcome, presented him to the Duke d'Angoulême's confessor, then to the Duchess's, then to the guardian of the Duchess of Berri's conscience. The Archbishop was seated, and the rest, with due humility, stood in his presence till he bid them be seated. Miller watched their mode of expression, to modulate his own

by it. One asked if his Eminence wished for more air; upon which Miller asked if his Eminence had walked out much since his arrival. He is, it seems, a cardinal,—the first of those princes of the church who has been in Scotland since the memorable days of Cardinal Beaton. It is now rumoured that the Ex-Dey of Algiers is coming to Edinburgh: if so, he may address the ex-king in a manner that I thought still more applicable to Buonaparte's arrival among the shadowy sovereigns of ancient days: — "All they shall speak and say, Art thou also become weak as we, — art thou become like one of us?" What a solemn and awful passage this is, in the fourteenth of Isaiah! — One grows dizzy in looking at this whirl of alteration.

My passion is to see the Duchess of Angoulême. I have for many years cherished a mournful admiration of that long-enduring heroine of calamity: I revere her piety, and honour her deep and undisguised filial affection. The Whigs here, taking up the tone of the French, whom they delight to glorify, say that she has an unpleasant expression of countenance, — quite a scowl: I tell them she rises in my estimation by not concealing that virtuous indignation, the impression of which on her firm and noble mind must be indelible.

I have been reading in successive Quarterly Reviews, first, a Polynesian article of a very comfortable description, which I recommend to your perusal; then a discussion — I cannot call it a criticism — on "Butler's Analogy," which pleased, and, I hope, instructed me. Next, I lighted on a prize, of which till very lately I did not know the existence; in-

deed, it is not long since these letters from Mrs. Carter to Mrs. Montagu were published: they carry on, unintentionally, a series of autobiography most instructive and delightful. Mrs. Carter truly exemplified the maxim, that to be good is to be happy. Happy she certainly was, beyond the race of women: she had several attached brothers and sisters, whose characters and understandings were of the superior class, and who found in her the sagest of counsellors and warmest of friends; while their worldly interests were, in many instances, advanced by the influence which the extent of her acquirements and talents, and the excellence of her character, had among many powerful and distinguished friends. It was not the least of her high privileges that she appears through life to have been moving in an atmosphere of worth, elegance, and piety. Miss Fanshawe says, in one of her letters to me, written soon after the death of this venerated person, that she appears to her to have been half an angel and half a sage; differing from most of her sex in having laid down a plan in the outset of life to which she adhered steadily to the end; writing Greek in the face of the world, without compunction, never losing a friend, and never making an enemy.

In the course of reading, which is thus opened to you, you meet with much to confute a vulgar error, of which malignity and envy are the parents, — that of supposing that people are idle, useless, and vicious, in proportion as birth, wealth, and education give them advantages over others. Where there is not a deep foundation of principle, there is no doubt that the snares of the world lie thicker in their path than in that

of persons in humbler life: but supposing these restraints to exist, such characters have more extensive powers of doing good, in every sense; while the good taste and elegance, which add grace to their manners and sentiments, impress upon the young mind the beauty of holiness, through that medium of refinement which early culture renders so attractive. We hear much of the vices of the great; and right it is that they should be peculiarly stigmatised, as implying the abuse of so many advantages. Of the virtues of individuals in that rank of life we hear much less; virtue and piety being in their very nature quiet and unobtrusive.

Were I to live as long as my sister-in-law Mrs. Stuart, I might go by the railroad to breakfast with you, and return here to dinner. This respectable antiquity departed last week, after a life prolonged to a hundred years and seven months: she paid very dearly the penalty of longevity, having suffered constant pain for five years; but I hope she has not suffered in vain. Pray that my storm-beat vessel may attain, even before the curtain falls, the harbour of peace. Yours, most affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCCXXX.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 17th November, 1830.

My dear Friend,

When Mr. ——, the London bookseller, was here he called on me, and we seemed, and I fancy, were very much pleased with each other. The result on his side was, that he sent me a present of Sir Walter Scott's Demonology; on mine, that I have some prospect of a republication, but this is merely surmise. Sir Walter, as usual, tells his story better than any one would; and it is perhaps of consequence to us to know how many shackles of prejudice, by which the wisest and best of our ancestors were enthralled, we have shaken off; but certainly the details, though they form a singular chapter in the history of the human mind, are very revolting. There is so much gross folly and deliberate cruelty on the part of the persecutors, and on the part of the persecuted so many distinct and connected circumstances in their confessions, that one is at a loss how to keep down one's credulity. There is no end of the forms which wickedness takes; and certainly those who believed too much were as much, though not so fatally for themselves, in the wrong as those who believe too little. This is speaking too strongly; the former having often good intentions, the latter the contrary.

Of all the atrocious wretches ever heard of, I think the man who made witch-finding his profession was the most detestable. I knew personally the granddaughter of a reputed witch who was burnt at Inver-

ness at a later period than that which Sir Walter mentions as the latest. She was a woman of great powers and strong passions, and a notorious scold. The Provost of that day, Macintosh by name, was a very good-natured man, and popular. The culprit was believed in the town to possess supernatural powers, and rather boasted of the evil she could do, and particularly threatened the life of the provost: he was seized with a lingering illness, probably increased by the apprehension that the powers of darkness were in league with his magical enemy. So her house was broken open, and under her bed were found certain uncouth images stuck full of pins, meant to represent and also to torment the poor provost, which she at length confessed to be intended for his destruction: she was therefore burnt in all the usual forms. Now there was little room for incredulity or compassion here; for she certainly wished and attempted to summon the powers of darkness in aid of her own malevolence.

I was amused at Sir Walter's caution in keeping so entirely clear of the second-sight: like myself, I am pretty confident he has a glimmering belief of, though not the same courage to own it. The truth is, all imaginative persons have a dim hovering belief in the visions of the shadowy forms of the supernatural and incomprehensible, and find themselves cribbed and limited in the more material world.

I am scribbling in random haste to overtake a person going your way. I cannot let a conveyance pass without telling you that I am very affectionately yours,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCCXXXI.

TO MRS. HOOK, CLARENDON SQUARE, LEAMINGTON.

Edinburgh, 27th November, 1830.

My dear Friend,

With all its increasing infirmities, and even with the accumulated sorrows of my peculiar lot, I do not find age so dark and unlovely as the Celtic bard seems to consider it. However imperfectly my labour has been performed, we may consider it nearly concluded; and even though my cup of sorrow has been brimful, the bitter ingredient of shame has not mingled with it. On all those who were near and dear to me I can look back with approbation, and may tenderly cherish unspotted memories, fond recollections, and the hopes that terminate not here. I feel myself, certainly not landed, but in a harbour from whence I am not likely to be blown out by new tempests. I am most thankful for having thus far preserved to me the use of my faculties; my ever-waking imagination will, I hope, prevent the tranquillity that has succeeded a stormy life from sinking into apathy,—the worst symptom of growing indolence. I feel a greater reluctance than formerly to write, which I regret, because I always find myself the better of what warms my heart, and calls forth some degree of mental energy, as I only write to friends whom I love, or to some to whom I hope my writing may be, in some way, serviceable. . . . . .

I began this letter three days ago, and meant to go leisurely on, and make you acquainted with the

friends, the books, the objects of various kinds that occupy me, saying with Madame Maintenon, "We shall see a pretty old age, if old age can be pretty."

My deep sympathy with the forlorn royalties at Holyrood*, as far as they are concerned, has quite effaced my anti-Gallican prejudices, which I own to be very strong. In the great volume of Whig inconsistencies, one of the most extraordinary chapters is that which relates to the Roman Catholic religion, which is, in their view, a very good thing in Ireland, where it has ever been the parent of disasters, massacres, and hatred; and an excellent thing in England, where the light of the Reformation shines on the eyes that are wilfully shut against it. Yet in France, where it is the national religion, and where millions have never heard of any other, it is odious, despicable, and most abhorrent to reason and philosophy, especially as it is professed by Charles X., and the pure-minded and long suffering Dauphiness †, whose piety I revere, and whose dignified conduct I greatly admire; in short, I love her for all those qualities for which the French disliked and calumniated her. I should have despised her if she could have smiled on the murderers of her parents, or degraded herself by any association with the females, equivocal at best, that shared their guilty fortunes. How could she, with a mind of firmness and a heart of feeling, be gay, or even cheerful, in that glittering Pandemonium,—for such Paris must appear to her?

* Holyrood Palace, near Edinburgh, had become the residence of Charles X. and the French Royal Family, after the Revolution of 1830.

† The Duchess of Angoulême.

In her agonised mind the light of youthful cheerfulness was early extinguished to revive no more: a character of such depth and strength was incomprehensible to a light and frivolous people. With all his faults, and with all his hatred to her family, the clear-headed Usurper knew better than any of his subjects the power and extent of her character, when he said she was the only man of her family. I think Pope's fine address to Lord Oxford in the Tower might apply to the Duchess, merely varying the name:—

> "Even I,
> Through fortune's cloud one truly great can see,
> Nor fear to tell that *Angoulême* is she."

I often receive game from my old friends in the Highlands, but last week three of the most beautiful snow-white ptarmigans came; they had already thrown off their summer dress, and were milk-white, with the exception of rich scarlet eyebrows. I could not think of eating the beauties myself, and immediately destined them for the Duchess, lodging them in a slight little basket, and sending them with a Highland porter, with orders merely to hand them in to the servant and come away; which was done. Here, to the best of my memory, is the accompanying note:—"Mrs. Grant, who has ever regarded the Duchess of Angoulême with the deepest respect and admiration, hopes that Her Royal Highness will do her the honour to accept a few mountain birds, which are here accounted rare; and that she may be excused for the humble expression of a sentiment deep felt, and long cherished." I received a polite acknowledgment next

day. . . . . These royalties walk about the streets, and lounge in a certain bookseller's shop. This person is a favourite, the king having known him thirty years since, when he was at Holyrood. I hear a great deal about them, and all I hear is in their favour.

I am very diligent in the perusal of your friend the Bishop of Limerick's admirable book. I began in the middle, finding much attraction in the deep humility and saint-like purity of Howe. I am now reading Scougall, and feel inclined to say with Milton, "That strain I heard was of a higher mood." Cudworth, which concludes the collection, I have not begun. I think these republications are a due tribute to memories that cannot perish, and tend to perpetuate the benefit which the last generation derived from these witnesses to divine truth. I have not proceeded very far yet, but have met with nothing on the most momentous of subjects more clear, forcible, and impressive. I must conclude in a hurry, with my love to Georgiana, and all grateful reverence to the worthy prelate to whom I am so much obliged. Adieu, dear friend: I am, hastily, but very truly, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXXII.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 17th December, 1830.

My dear Friend,

I have been longer in writing to you than I intended; but my time has been engrossed and my spirits depressed by the most painful of occupations—writing letters of condolence, such as they are, to real mourners, and of advice to some that greatly need it. . . . . .

There is a great outcry against the Duke of Wellington for declaring there should be no reform during his ministry. No wonder; there is something so fallacious in all the proceedings of the opposite party, as his bitter experience may testify in the Irish affair, where, under pretence of religious equality, they only grasped at political power. This, no doubt, the Duke understood; but on the principle of removing a long-lasting bone of contention, which afforded a pretext of disturbance to turbulent spirits, he granted the fatal boon. To him it proved the envenomed robe of Alcides, poisoning his peace and withering his laurels. He foresaw that granting reform to tumult and clamour would have the same effect: like Hardyknute, —

> "*Stoutly* stept he east the wa',
> And *stoutly* stept he west;
> Full sixty years he now had seen,
> Wi' scarce seven years of rest."

And stoutly he stood up in parliament to declare that he would not promise what he could not possibly perform.

The present Whig ministers, to use a Scotch phrase, will find their sin in their punishment. Thirty long years, much more indeed, have they encouraged their agents and followers to inflame the minds of the lower classes with discontent; the flame they have taken such pains to kindle has now broken out, and it will be their business — no easy or pleasant one — to extinguish it. And now, when on this eminence, far above the stagnant atmosphere of their old associates, they breathe the "pure and serene air" of which Milton speaks, they will see their duty clearly, and discover that their own safety, as well as that of the country, depends on their undoing all they have done, and, in short, doing every thing which they blamed in others. They have little to fear from the Tories, who stand safely on the shore seeing them struggle in the tempest, not knowing to which of the saints they will turn. It is their own followers and admirers, disappointed and irritated as they must soon be, that they have to dread: they will be like Actæon — pursued, and finally destroyed by his hounds. . . . . I find myself first growing political and then classical, — in short, going far out of the way. Truth is, except to my own family, my lips have been hermetically sealed since these overturns began.

Your right reverend friend's gift has been a perfect treasure to me; but that pleasure has been suspended for a week past by a new source of enjoyment — the perusal of Bishop Sandford's lately published life.* This truly humble man had no self; he lived in a purer element: I greatly wish your

* Bishop of Edinburgh, in the Episcopal Church of Scotland.

prelate* saw this beautiful relic of a real saint. It was at the house of Lady Apreece, the mother-in-law of your friend Lady Davy; that I first met Bishop Sandford, one of the most truly spiritual-minded persons I have ever known. He was withal a finished gentleman, both in manners and feelings, and an elegant, and I believe, as far as languages go, a profound scholar, quite in the Oxford manner; for there he spent his happiest years. His disposition was ever happy; but in his later years it required all the support of lively faith, and the tender care of an affectionate family, to drag him through "that long disease, his life," which one might almost say was prolonged by miracle. We took much to each other, often met, and continued to visit till his increased home avocations and my family distress put such visits nearly, though not entirely, at an end. I always held the Bishop high: he was no great talker, yet by the aid of delicacy and good taste had the happiest manner I have ever met with of leading conversation to serious subjects, with an ease and grace peculiar to himself.

I am interrupted, and must send this off immediately without waiting to say any thing of the Bishop of Limerick's most gratifying letter, except that it has arrived, and that I shall duly attend to it. How fortunate that such a blessing should reach me when most needed. I remain, dear friend, affectionately, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

* The late Dr. Jebb, Bishop of Limerick, then residing at Leamington.

LETTER CCCXXXIII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, New-Year's Day, 1831.

Once more, my dear friend, I address to you my affectionate wishes with the opening year for a continuance of the many blessings that surround you,—blessings so meekly borne and so kindly shared that it can scarcely be considered as presumption to regard them as a prelude to more complete and permanent felicity. This annual *rivet* to the long strong bonds of amity by which we have been connected had always something of more than common interest; but when we both draw near the closing scene of our lengthened pilgrimage it assumes an additional importance, before which the common interests of this present existence sink into insignificance. The awful futurity before us can never be long absent from our thoughts. Pray for me often and earnestly; my faith is weak and wavering, Tell my dear Mrs. Brown that my letters to you are all to be shared with her, and that from a warm and grateful heart I send her all the benisons of the season. With many such to you and yours, I am, yours, most affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXXIV.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 26th January, 1831.

I wrote to you lately of the death of Henry Mackenzie, in his eighty-fifth year. A very correct likeness on the wall constantly draws my attention to him. He seems to whisper from the tomb—"Thy place is here, sad sister; come away." Another respected visiter, Principal Baird, is dangerously ill, and may soon also be called to render his account, which, as far as the humblest piety and the best intentions go, will, I trust, be accepted through the only availing merit, which he always preached to the best of his abilities.

I observe what you say as to the always dangerous and often fatal gift which for a good purpose has been in a small measure bestowed upon me. Will you believe that I literally came before the public "obliged by hunger and requests of friends;" and, till the sanction of that public was impressed on me, I never dreamt that I possessed the powers imputed to me since: then all I sought was peace and bread. I am now, in my old age, when worldly pursuits and even praise are weighed and found wanting. I am certain you will not think it one of the poor artifices of vanity when I tell you that I feel pained and alarmed when people come, not to see, but actually to look at me. Alarming queries conscience puts to my

secret soul; I am truly startled to think how little thankful I have been, and how much the charm of elegant literature has engrossed valuable time. I feel my responsibility for the single talent, which, though not buried, has not been put out to proper interest. The hope that you and my dear Mrs. Brown pray earnestly for me, and that your prayers, though thus late, may prove effective, is more to me than mere human praise. I feel much gratified to think that my dear Mrs. Brown may be induced soon to come with you to visit me. Though my intercourse with her is and has been chiefly through you, I may safely say she is, though highly esteemed, by few so thoroughly appreciated as by the long attached and truly grateful friend of you both,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXXV.

TO DR. FRANCIS BOOTT, GOWER STREET, LONDON.

Brae House, Edinburgh,
21st February, 1831.

My dear Sir,

I should have sooner acknowledged the pleasure which your letter afforded me, but my eyes were weakened to that degree that I was obliged to give up writing, with the exception of brief scraps to acknowledge epistolary kindness; but I cannot send a brief scrap to you, especially as I well know your friendship to be an evergreen. With an increasing family

here, and so many relations in America, I am well aware of the calls that both the old world and the new must have upon a mind that vibrates, like yours, to every touch that calls forth sympathy. This is very unfit in this unsentimental age of calculation: but the night draweth near when no man can work; and for the short time that remains I shall cherish those feelings and attachments, which have borne me over the evils of life, and still flourish on the graves of the lovely and beloved. In some nervous heavy hours of indisposition I feel as if I had survived every body and every thing worth living for, and were nearly alone in a changed world, where my remaining friends are by absence and distance dead to me. But when the sun breaks out, and even now, when the snow-drop and hepatica appear, and my unwearied son, whose virtuous and domestic habits are my greatest earthly consolation, returns, I feel amused and renovated. Of the graves in view from my windows*, I say with Young, —

> "Are angels there? slumbers, rak'd up in dust,
> Celestial fire?"

I presume you can add the rest from memory.

* * * * * *

Now, having abundantly saddened myself and you, I will throw a parting sunbeam, "with farewell sweet," over my conclusion, remembering your affectionate admiration of poor James Gray and his "Sab-

* Four of Mrs. Grant's daughters, Mary, Isabella, Anne, and Moore, were interred in the West Church burying-ground, opposite Brae House.

bath in the Highlands." What a history was his! What a dupe, what a slave he was to his own imagination, and to the designs of others: nobody ever joined so much integrity with so much imprudence. Pope's life was a long disease; Gray's a long blunder. Providence particularly watches over people unqualified to take care of themselves: in Gray's case, "though the coachman was tipsy, the chariot drove home." His affairs were sinking into perfect ruin, and nothing left to him but a good black coat, and orders in the English Church, which an Irish bishop, captivated with his learning, had bestowed. Well; he carried his black coat, his orders, his energy and simplicity, to England, not omitting his Greek and enthusiasm, and went straight forward, unintroduced, to an Indian director, on whom may my benediction rest. This discerning worthy immediately appointed him a chaplain in Bombay, with a thousand a year, and he was sent up the country to a dismal sandy waste, where his wife soon died. Even there he was appreciated: one of the native princes had committed a crime which our people did not feel competent to punish with death, but they deposed him and confined him to his palace. His son, then eleven years old, is to be designed and educated as his successor; and Gray is appointed tutor and guardian to this princely family. He is in a perfect flame of devout enthusiasm, and thinks he shall convert the whole district: perhaps he may; but in the mean time I see him mentioned with high veneration in Mrs. Elwood's Travels.

Give my love to your two dear Marys. I am glad to hear of you all, but I never doubt your affection

when I do not. Why should I, who have a clear title to it? And you must just love on for the little time that remains to your faithful friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXXVI.

TO MRS. IZETT.

My dear Friend, Brae House, 4th March.

My life is very barren of events, though the early period of it was crowded with them. The latest is the arrival of a young lady, Miss St. Paul, daughter to Sir Horace St. Paul of Northumberland, coming to me for a temporary residence, whom I have received, after declining for some time past every thing of the kind, unwilling as I am to break the sabbath of my days with cares or solicitudes for others. I shall tell you more of her when I see you. What have you been reading in these days? Literary luxuries will soon, I fear, fade from my view; my hard-wrought eyes, with which I have dealt most unmercifully, seem now tired of their indulgence, and remind me of the old Scotch proverb, that "wilful waste makes woful want."

I am sure I shall have all your sympathy in my actual sorrow for the death of poor Robert Miller*

* Of the respectable firm of Messrs. Manners and Miller, booksellers in Edinburgh,

the bookseller;—not poor now, I trust, for certainly never was human being more free from all guile, malice, and hypocrisy. His was in two respects a happy life,—enjoying the good will of all who knew him, and rejoicing with no common joy in the good that others acquired. To me his departure forms a blank not easily filled up; his cordial good will, his harmless though ludicrous old stories, his most graphic descriptions, and his honest countenance beaming with benevolence, which has shone unclouded on me for twenty years. Where shall we find another Robert Miller! But it is hard to say whether the days of his decline might not have been darkened by adversity, which I fear was too likely, and which I really dreaded. Whether we had the feast of reason with him or not, we were always sure of the flow of soul; and so concludes my dirge, but so will not my remembrance of the humble and grateful friend. Yours, affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXXVII.

TO MRS. BROWN.

Edinburgh, 12th April, 1831.

My dear old Friend,

You are so happy and so busy at home, and moreover making such good use, in a higher sense, of the remaining sands in your ebbing glass, that it is a bold request to ask even a short relinquishment of such pleasing duties, to visit one that has so few

attractions to hold out. But knowing so well as you do the bereaved state and infirmities of one whom you have loved so long, so well, will, I am sure, be an inducement to you to come. One like me, to whom habit and necessity have made the acting of a part familiar, finds abundance of time to struggle with sad recollections, without oppressing one's friends with them. You will see me, as you have ever done, —thankful for the solitary blessing that remains, for tolerable health, and for the power of entering into the enjoyments of others. This letter is a *mark of respect;* one of friendship is unnecessary, all my letters to your sister being equally meant for your perusal, when leisure serves. As ordinary people say of their dinners —I wish they were better for your sake. Adieu, dear friend, with kind regards to your numerous progeny. I remain yours, very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXXVIII.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Brae House, Edinburgh,
5th May, 1831.

My dear Friend,

Though I know not when or how this letter will reach you, I must in the mean time relieve my own mind by answering your welcome and emphatic scrap, and thanking you for the enclosure. I could not have supposed that at my own eleventh hour any public event could have taken such entire possession

of my mind. The King, by this dissolution, has opened a door to faction and sedition such as brought "the gray discrowned head" of a higher and purer character to the block. The attacks on the altar are sure forerunners of those on the throne; and, what betwixt sectaries, Catholics, and the enemies of all religion, there is a formidable band of enemies at present in array. Unless the aristocracy erect, as they ought to do for their own sakes, a bulwark against the evil spirit that has gone forth among the lower classes, our mad imitation of the French will be complete.

I am just reviving from a most oppressive cold. I had begun this letter a fortnight since, but the indolence of age, aided by severe indisposition, stopped my career; and besides, I thought it was right to wait till my faithful Sir Charles Forbes, ever true to Church and King, should be re-elected. I wish I could bring you here by some magical power, were it but for an hour: I am sure you would like my house, with its large shadowing trees and wealth of spring-flowers in front; the close vicinity of the castle, frowning down on the beautiful and graceful chapel of St. John's; and the rich show of blossoms in my sloping garden at the west end of the house. This residence of mine is like a rural oasis, which some propitious dryad seems to have protected, with all its shade and verdure, from the encroachments of the mere mortal dwellings of stone and mortar which surround it.

A lady has lately made me a present of a finely-bound copy of Moore's Life of Lord Byron, with which I have been by turns amused, disgusted, and

delighted. What sound sense, what a sparkle of wit, with what detestable profligacy, and what lamentable misery of mind—despising the world, yet living on its breath. Moore's morality, all along, seems somewhat lax; and he evidently encouraged, if he did not create, the hatred to authority, and the democratic spirit which added bitterness to all his noble friend's other mortifications. I see no person, however naturally amiable, tainted with this evil spirit without growing generally discontented and disagreeable. I however find hope where others find fear: the shameless outrages of the mob will, I think, create a salutary alarm among the middle classes. I know some already who yield to the conviction that nothing can equal the horrors of mob government. There will, I suppose, be a great struggle; and if the aristocracy desert themselves, they deserve the worst that can happen to them. Pray let me hear something of dear Eliza, of Lady Charlotte, and of Lady D. I condole with you on the loss of your pleasant neighbours, but hope they will return with robin-redbreast. Adieu, dear friend: yours, with cordial affection,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXXXIX.

TO MISS MERCER, CLIFTON.

My dear Miss Mercer, Edinburgh, 31st October, 1831.

Age will at length assert its power, however we may resist it. My eyes and my memory are by no means what they were, but my heart is neither shrunk into littleness, nor chilled into selfishness: while I can love, and be beloved by a chosen few, and have the bread that never failed me, and some small portion of that peace which passeth understanding, I shall not, with all my bereavements, murmur or think myself forsaken because the loved and lamented are happier than I could make them.

I have indeed been much longer than I could wish in answering a letter from you, which I received with much pleasure. In the course of last summer a most severe influenza was very prevalent here; it attacked me with great violence, attended with such a degree of fever, that my recovery was thought very doubtful. I am thankful to say, however, that I did recover rapidly and completely. The doctor prescribed change of air and the country: I thought the air of my own house very pure, and my own garden very rural, and had little wish to quit either. My son, however, decided for me. He had, in visiting a friend near Stirling, discovered a most desirable place of abode, which, under the musical name of Blawlowan*, pos-

* The situation of Blawlowan is particularly sheltered, and the air remarkably soft and mild, qualities implied in its name.

sessed many advantages of comfort, convenience, and desirable neighbours, and such a combination of the grander and softer features of ever-lovely nature in the mountain with waving woods and sheltering rocks that rose behind, defending our abode from every rugged blast, and the fresh verdure of the literally flowery meadows before the house. I cannot convey, in words, the least idea of the quiet and sheltered beauty of the scenery where we dwelt. We had very pleasant lodgings for ourselves and a servant: ourselves includes a young cousin, who lives with me, and my son. We had also a guest's room most agreeably filled for the five or six weeks that we remained there. I do not know that I have for years past enjoyed any thing so much as the serenity, soft air, and constant sunshine that prevailed all the time we were absent: of mere weather, Italy could show nothing finer. The Airthrie springs, which are powerful, and begin to be much frequented, were within a mile of us; and the villages, thickly planted in that rich and beautiful district, have such an air of peace and plenty, besides perfect neatness, and an embellishment of plants and flowers, as you would delight in as much as I did.

I wish I could give you as comfortable an account of all our mutual friends as I have done of my own rejuvenescence. Mrs. C.'s health is much broken up, and her cheerful spirits lowered by many vexations, as well as by the successive loss of two sisters. Her young relation proves to be a conceited youth, anxious for distinction, and full of spiritual vanity: it would tire you to hear of his absurdities. What I still

more regret is, that Mrs. L. has embraced that absurd system of belief in modern miracles and prophecies. This really looks like midsummer madness; but one of its worst results is, that it loosens the ties of affection and even of kindred. Those who are once enlisted among these fanatics give their whole hearts to them and them only; and to this infatuation every social affection is sacrificed, and gives way to an indifference to all that was formerly most dear. A folio sheet would not hold half the absurdities and follies one hears and sees arising from this morbid passion for novelty and for superiority to their fellow Christians.*

Of Mrs. F. you wish to hear; she is still confined by her dutiful attentions to an aunt of ninety, to whom she owes a great debt of gratitude. She came down to Scotland to see her son, but did not find him alive. Mrs. M. F. has conducted herself admirably during his long illness of three years: never was wife more attached. Death has been to her frequent and familiar as to me: within a short period she attended the death-bed of her brother, of her mother, and of her husband! I am, dear Miss Mercer, with sincere attachment, always yours,

ANNE GRANT.

* Alluding to what was termed the Row-heresy, then prevalent in the west of Scotland.

LETTER CCCXL.

TO MRS. BROWN, ST. VINCENT STREET, GLASGOW.

Edinburgh, 3d December, 1831.

My dear and unchanged old Friend,

I have too long hesitated about fulfilling my promise of writing to you, partly from a hope that I should be enabled to give a better account of the manner in which I have profited by your kind gift of Mr. Keith's work *, or, to speak more plainly, of the state of my mind with regard to that awful futurity to which I and my coevals are so nearly approaching. I think I have told you before that this is a theme which I cannot touch but with a trembling hand. I always, in addition to other fears, have a dread of being betrayed into insincerity by using the language which frequent use makes familiar to those who are less carnally minded, and have lived more suitably to their profession than I have done. Doubly a slave to the world,—pressed down by its necessities, and lulled by its flatteries,—I was indeed surrounded by more difficulties, trials, and temptations than I could possibly explain to you. See my sin in my punishment: those beloved creatures to whose welfare and whose comfort my every thought was devoted, —for whom I prayed and for whom I laboured, with incessant anxiety,—are all taken from me, but not

* "The Evidence of Prophecy." By the Rev. Dr. Keith of St. Cyrus.

so as to leave me sorrowing without hope. Too much of this.

You have loved me so much and so long, and in consequence take so deep an interest in what concerns me in far more important than earthly interests, that I well know it has been a serious grief to you to find me, who am so much older than yourself, so often warned of approaching mortality, outliving all my family, still wedded to a perishing world, and while I try to persuade myself that I have some good motive for being so, still walking in a vain shadow, and disquieting myself in vain. I flattered myself that I had made some advances in the spiritual life while I was last summer quiet in the country; sat much out of doors with my books, and derived more satisfaction in perusing them; but still felt myself at an unapproachable distance from that perfect love which casteth out fear. But if the deepest consciousness of my own unworthiness, the most entire reliance on the merits, and a humble and thorough confidence in the precious promises, of a Redeemer ——, I cannot say of myself all you would wish to hear; but I feel something like a dim glimpse of distant uncertain light, an impression that I shall not sink into the grave benighted. I dare trust myself no further on this mysterious ground.

I think I speak moderately when I say I have read Mr. Keith's invaluable work on the Prophecies four times through, though not continuously; and I think it must carry irresistible conviction to the mind of all his readers, except such as are described in Scripture as having been given up to a strong

delusion because they believed in a lie. I had, a short time before, read through the lesser Prophets; but though with a general sense that their terrible predictions were merited inflictions which had long since been fulfilled, yet these awful truths were not so deeply impressed on my mind until the perusal of this work. Mr. Keith is now on a visit to Edinburgh; and we have renewed our previous acquaintance. He is a person who combines superior talents with great modesty, and an earnest and zealous discharge of his duties: the result is, that there is no instance in my knowledge of a clergyman more beloved by the lower, and more respected by the higher, class of his hearers.

So far I wrote on Saturday. Yesterday (Sunday) I was coming from my own room, in the morning, in a kind of reverie; my crutch got entangled, and I fell my full length on the floor. I had heard so often of the brittle nature of old people's bones, that I felt my time was nearly come. The doctor prescribed hot salt to be applied, and frequently renewed; and it has had a blessing with it, and done wonders: I could not have hoped to be so far recovered in weeks, if recovered at all. How often, amid so many afflictions, have I applied to myself the reflection of Young:—

> "A rebel 'midst the thunders of the throne,
> Blest and chastis'd, a flagrant rebel still."

This is a new instance of those signal mercies which have been so often vouchsafed to unworthy me. I had formerly plausible pretexts for bowing in the house of Rimmon; but of these none remain.

I am thankful to say that this day (Wednesday)

I am a great deal better: I am, in truth, with a deep sense of your long, strong regard, gratefully, affectionately, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXLI.

TO MRS. BROWN.

Edinburgh, 18th December, 1831.

I have read your letter, my dear old friend, with deep and tender feelings, and cannot for a moment delay telling you how precious I esteem it, knowing how much it must have cost you to write it in your present state of health.* Your letter brought back an overpowering rush of recollections of your unwearied kindness to me at times when I appeared so little worthy of it, by, what might be supposed, my alienation, when the world, my snare and my support, called forth all the faculties that should have been otherwise directed. Yet their Heavenly Father saw fit to chasten me by taking into his own care those for whom I watched through sleepless nights, and thought and acted through restless days. But it is all mercy.

I am comforted to hear that you are cheerful and active, as far as possible, under your circumstances.

* Mrs. Brown was at this time suffering from a lingering illness, to which she and her friends anticipated a fatal termination, which was realised by her death not long afterwards.

This is duty: existence supported by views like yours is a blessing. We have a long eternity before us, and there is a great likelihood that we shall see our friends, and be known as we were known, in a future state. But precious to our friends is the time we remain with them; and at the price of some protracted suffering we should patiently wait the period of parting with them. Your excellent mother did not sit still, in her last days, inviting languor to take possession of the enfeebled frame: she well understood that different minds require different aliments; and occupied part of her last days in looking over some passages of history that had given her pleasure formerly,—one of the enjoyments suited to her enlarged masculine powers. But though well aware that the end of time was approaching to her, that was not with her the time of hurried preparation: her lamp had been long since supplied with "odorous oil;" her views were clear and strong:—

> "Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,
> Who stand upon the threshold of the new."

Often have I sheltered my own perhaps inordinate love of knowledge, behind this recollection of your sainted mother. I am deeply sensible, my dear friend, that your essential and unwearied friendship for me did not stop on this side the grave; that you were anxiously waiting for the time when God would be gracious to me; and that no human being had so deep an interest in my eternal welfare. Of all this I have felt, and still more feel, the incalculable value.

I am glad to hear you walk out. I will write what

I have to say further to your sister; and can only say now,—

> "Wilt thou, when parting, cast a shred
> Of thy rich mantle o'er my head!"

Farewell for the present: you are never out of my mind; and if your sister says I have not tired you, I will write to you soon again. Yours, most gratefully,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXLII.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 26th January, 1832.

My dear Friend,

The only thing I have to tell you that can give you any pleasure is, that this odd elastic frame of mine, which always rises from a crush like trodden camomile, is perfectly restored to all its functions. God has ever dealt mercifully with me, and in no instance more so than in enabling me to submit without murmuring to all his dispensations, even when my heart-strings were torn in a manner to which all mere bodily suffering sinks in comparison.

> "To hope the best is pious, brave, and wise,
> And may itself procure what it presumes."

I always hoped against hope, till the extinguisher of all mere earthly hope laid his cold hand upon me and forbid me to cherish delusion any longer.

Have I not filled half a page about myself, and this while we are standing on an isthmus between the

cholera and the unblest Reform Bill. This last I consider as the greatest evil of the two. I was always angry at Jeffrey's politics; yet I know so much good of his private character, that I am sorry for his own sake to see him launching forth firebrands and arrows, and saying, "Am I not in sport?"* He is no money-lover, and is kind-hearted, and a most generous relation; and, moreover, his talents, though in some respects misapplied, help to keep up our national credit for genius. Of late so many of our stars have set, none others rising to supply their place, that the sky seems darkened. Some of those, however, shed a malign light while they lasted: but one remains, of unequalled brightness, shedding sweet influence,

> "Fair as a star, when only one
> Is shining in the sky."

I am glad indeed to hear of your dear Walter's gracious state of mind; and trust that the leisure and tranquillity in which he must now find it his duty to indulge, and the serenity indicated by your account of his mind, will, in God's good time, produce an improvement in his general health. Give my love to him, and say I think of him very often. I sincerely sympathise with you in the privation you are about to sustain in the departure of neighbours so justly admired and revered as the Bishop of Limerick and Mr. Forster. Yours has been an enviable privilege: cultivated intellect, kindness, and perfect sincerity afford of themselves such a mental feast, so much

* Mr. Jeffrey was at this time Lord Advocate for Scotland, and had a seat in Parliament, as member for a Scotch burgh.

food for the understanding and the heart, that there is nothing of entertainment comparable to it. But "that strain you heard was of a higher mood." How will you be able to endure chit-chat, or tolerate prosing, after this? You will be like Madame de Sevigné, delighted when your every-day guests leave you. I should, in my ordinary state of mind, have deemed it presumption to make even you the medium of my gratitude and good wishes; but my modesty has melted away before encouragement. Say, therefore, for me whatever you think will best express the respect and veneration I feel for your excellent Bishop, not omitting his friend. Dr. Morehead, of St. Paul's Chapel here, has begged the loan of the Bishop's volume, and is highly satisfied with its doctrines, austere as the man of the world may think them. Adieu, dear friend. Yours, affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXLIII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 23d February, 1832.

My dear Friend,

This forenoon I had appropriated to writing a letter to your sister, but it evaporated in the way most of mine do,—in hearing requests, and giving very painful, because unsatisfactory, answers to people not in the least interesting, who give me credit for influence I never pretended to have.

My morning, however, was not wholly lost. A very frequent and very agreeable visiter, Margaret Steven, came to communicate to me a long letter from Rome, from our friend Miss Gibson. Johnny Armstrong said to King James, on being refused the pardon he so earnestly solicited, "that it was needless to seek warm water under cold ice." Not so Miss G.: under her external ice there is much warm water to be found, much kindliness of heart, much general benevolence, and particular attachment, and, best of all, sound genuine religious principle. Now, however, a letter from Rome is to me but as a letter from London: I have listened with interest to so many animated tourists, and read with more than common attention so many eloquent descriptions, that I begin to think I know more of Italy than some who have traversed it.

People, I believe, in some instances, affect the ease they do not feel while this calamity, the cholera, hovers over us, which I do by no means consider as a slight and passing evil; yet I consider it as an evil that will be productive of much good. One has been tempted, of late, to cry "Why sleeps the thunder?" But it sleeps no longer, and seems impelled by the red right arm of divine wrath to awake a guilty nation to a sense of their danger, hereafter, by the impending calamity. We have, as yet, been gently dealt with here, in proportion to the number of our population; and of the small number attacked, several have recovered. But it appears to me great presumption to indulge so much as people do in speculation and conjecture about a disease so evidently a

peculiar infliction, and different from all other modes of suffering hitherto known. We should all endeavour to retain and cherish the awful views of judgment and eternity which this calamity impresses on the mind. There is a certain quiet solemnity in every countenance, that shows the feeling to be general, and, I trust, beneficial.

This letter goes by a clerical nephew of my lost friend, General Stewart. I am, with much affection to Mrs. Brown, yours, ever,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXLIV.

TO MRS SMITH.

Edinburgh, 12th March, 1832.

My dear Friend,

I think there is little room to hope that your truly excellent son-in-law* can much longer resist the disorder that has been so long making ceaseless depredations on a life so valuable. There was something very engaging in that alacrity to please or serve others, and that constant flow of good humour, that threw a pleasant light over his sterling worth. The breaking of a tie so strong and so tender as that by which he and his wife were united must cost a dreadful pang. She may be said to have had a long preparation; but watching over the object nearest the heart, with long and sore anxiety, only endears it

* The late John Maccall, Esq. of Ibrox Hill.

the more, and increases the sense of desolation when that engrossing object is gone. No one, certainly, has stronger motives for resignation when the blow does come: she may look back with gratitude on many years of such happiness as very few attain to in this perishing world; and she has seen the life so precious prolonged almost beyond hope, through long suffering and infirmity.

The feeling of the vanity of all earthly things, and a dissatisfaction with myself,—a state of mind which I am not willing to speak of, though often liable to it of late, perhaps ultimately for my good,—has made me go in search of some new reading. I had looked over the Natural History of Enthusiasm before, but am now engaged in a diligent reperusal; and am thankful to find my mind not less equal than formerly to a work that requires such profound attention to do justice to its deep yet clear arguments. My attention has been also engaged by a voluminous Life of Bishop Heber, published by his widow, and containing his early travels on the Continent, and many of his letters, several of them addressed to persons formerly known to me,—Sir R. H. Inglis, for instance: they all possess considerable interest, indicate most laudable toryism, and something still better, an earnest desire to fulfil faithfully his ministerial duties. One likes to learn the opinions of a mind so clear and upright upon the passing events, and to know something more of the group of worthies with whom he was associated, among whom Thornton makes a principal. Like other men of genius and benevolence, he seemed to have enough to do

to live within bounds, owning, at the same time, that his income was very good, more than he was entitled to expect: he comforts himself, however, that, as they have no children, they may do very well. In the ninth year of their marriage a child appeared; and nothing could equal their joy except their grief at the loss of this precious child, barely a year old. I believe that they had two since.

How hard it is that when I just begin to be in the humour of writing my eyes force me to leave off. Tell Mrs. Brown I think of her very often, and always before I go to sleep. Offer my kind love to her. Would that I resembled her! With the utmost affection and esteem, I am, yours, very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXLV.

TO MRS. HOOK, LEAMINGTON.

Edinburgh, 16th April, 1832.

My dear Friend,

I did not write to you for some time past, because I thought you would be so much engaged with the dear branches of your family now about you.

I write to you at present with a heavy heart, the recent death of a much-valued friend, Mrs. Brown, having severed a tie which has subsisted above fifty years without a shade of difference. The deeper and more frequent were my afflictions the warmer was her sympathy, and the more anxious her en-

deavours to soothe and alleviate what could not be cured. Her husband, who had been called many years since from her solicitous tenderness, was a man of virtue and of talents, with the finest taste and the kindest heart, and of manly sincerity and independence of mind. His warm attachment to me was very gratifying to his excellent wife, to whose sainted spirit I would fain pay a due tribute of applause were I to indulge my own feelings. How blest have I been, among many sorrows, to have been tenderly allied to so much genuine unalloyed worth. What would wealth and distinction have been to me without those rich cordials of pious and fervent friendship, "sweet to the soul, and tasting strong of heaven?" I should never have known how rich I was in treasures of true love, had I been prosperous as the world accounts prosperity.

* * * * * *

I wish you to read some beautiful verses in the last number of Blackwood's Magazine, under the title of A Poet's dying Hymn. Here Mrs. Hemans excels her inexhaustible and inimitable self. I should place this effusion next to, perhaps above her fine lines beginning, "Restore the dead, thou sea!" Her crown of amaranth is wreathed with cypress. Sir Walter Scott and she have been to me the fabled fountain of youth: I drink and feel renovated. But time presses, and only permits me to say, that I am, to you and yours, a faithful and affectionate friend,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCCXLVI.

TO MRS. FRANCIS BOOTT, LONDON.

Brae House, Edinburgh,
25th April, 1832.

My dear Mrs. Boott,

Though rather worn out by a long letter to the Doctor, I must chat for a little with you. I am glad to hear that you and your family have enjoyed so much health and comfort since you have resided in London. . . . . My quiet has been at present somewhat disturbed by a necessary evil, — that of preparing to remove to another house, a better perhaps than this; but here I was prepared to live and die. Sheltered by trees older than myself in front, and with ground below where the beauties of spring are blooming in the fairest flowers of the season, while a large garden at the end of the house, now rich in blossom, has always afforded me a safe place to move about in after my feeble manner, and a sheltered seat; — O that you saw what I am about to leave! But I know it is right to go, and would be foolish to stay; but my affections cling close, not only to my few surviving friends, but to unanimated objects that have given me pleasure.*

I am sure, my dear Mrs. Boott, that you will not undervalue a trifling and very commonplace gift, — a couple of frocks, or what will make them, for dear little Isabella. What would I not give her if I could afford it! Hannah, the pious and grateful mother,

* The intended marriage of Mrs. Grant's son, with whom she was to continue to live, had rendered a change of house necessary.

when she sent her dedicated son to the Temple, brought him up, we are told in the chapter which relates those tender incidents, a "little coat" every year. So will I deal with this beloved creature, to whom my heart clings as if I had known her. I saw a motto on a little snuff-box that took my fancy, — "The gift is small, but love is all:" all, indeed, that makes earth supportable, all that we hope for in Heaven.

You will receive this letter from my son, whose reserved manner hides a true and warm heart, and who inherits warm regard for you and yours. God bless you, your children, and their father: I have no stronger expression of love and truth. Adieu, dear friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXLVII.

TO A FRIEND, IN THE UNITED STATES, AMERICA.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 26th April, 1832.

While so many of those very dear to us both, have through pangs fled to felicity, I take it for granted that you feel as I do, — clinging faster to the remaining ties, when so many have been broken. It is impossible to judge what human beings can or cannot bear. I think I have seldom seen an instance of attachment stronger than that which subsisted betwixt Sir Robert* and Lady Liston. When she

* The late Right Hon. Sir Robert Liston, for many years British Ambassador at Constantinople.

died it was the general opinion that he would not outlive her a month. Doatingly fond he was of her; but being a person of great composure and equanimity, he was calm and resigned, and contrived an occupation for himself, which seems to engross and even to console him. Travelling through Italy, he was struck with something in the architecture of a tomb, in that land of classic elegance: this model lived in his memory till the loss of his beloved partner suggested to him the design of commemorating, in a structure nearly resembling it, the spot where his ashes should be mingled with hers. The place of her final rest is opposite to Millburn, within two or three miles distance, near an old church, in a romantic and beautiful spot, where the broom blooms bonny, and crimson heather marks the wilder features of Scottish landscape. Now those birks and braes, that shed beauty round the last dwellings of mortality, are unfortunately contrasted with a village, which, I grieve to say, is, like most of our Scotch villages, dirty and ill-regulated. This unpleasant object stands on a little eminence which slopes down to the spot hallowed by the remains so dear to the good old knight. Well, he wished to improve this slovenly village, and make it a pleasant object to passengers; and having once begun this beneficial process, it has become quite a passion with him. He has made a road through the village, built a pretty school-house and some neat cottages, and laid out a lawn, with many other matters, useful and ornamental. The natives are catching the infection of elegance, having been rather lazy than poor, and are planting shrubs and flowers daily. The rejuvenes-

cence of the good Ambassador appears incredible: he has had agreeable parties visiting him, including Mrs. Hemans, her sons, and other visiters, for two months; and he often dines in town and goes out the same evening. To crown all, he is gone up to London to dine with the King and his fellow knights, having entered on his ninetieth year. Mr. Henry Mackenzie, who died some months ago, was nearly coeval with him.

There has lately arisen here much dissension in families, in consequence of a new religious sect, who pretend to inspiration and to the power of working miracles. Their source of inspiration appears to me to be spiritual pride, and the greatest miracles they work those of deluding some persons who had credit for common sense to adopt their absurdities. I believe they are not hypocritical, but they are pharisaical, and look down upon us all as publicans and sinners. Their absurdities are without end; they are sure of the commencement of the Millennium at the end of fourteen years. What is singular is, that many of the new converts to this ascetic sect are of those who were lately the gayest of the gay.

I regret the dissolution of parliament for depriving me of franks, as well as for many other reasons. I have no charity for those reckless innovators. There is a very awkward verse or two, which have been much ridiculed in our venerable translation of the Psalms: —

> "A man was famous, and was had
> In estimation,
> According as he lifted up
> His axe thick trees upon."

Such are our reformers, hacking and hewing at the

noble edifice which has for a thousand years been growing up till it has become the wonder of the world. When they finish their unhallowed labours they may erect a tomb over its relics, and inscribe on it the famous epitaph, —

"I was well — I would be better — and here I am."

Why should I stain my paper with vile politics? No, let me rather convey my good wishes (having nothing else to send) to the friends who remember me. I hope ere long to have a daughter-in-law who loves me very much; but this cannot be immediately. Every thing you say interests me: write then amply, dear friend, to yours, very cordially,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXLVIII.

TO MRS. IZETT.

My dear Friend, Brae House, 1st May, 1832.

I send you two volumes of Mrs. Carter's letters to Miss Talbot; I have not the first series, but these have far more interest. I knew Mrs. C. personally, and can tell much of her when I see you. Miss Talbot, who was born after her father's death, had beauty, genius, and manners unequalled for grace and sweetness; but being the child of sorrow, and baptized in tears, had, as generally happens in such cases, a very delicate constitution. Richardson made her and Mrs.

Carter known to each other. Mrs. Carter was first known to the world by her translation from the Greek of Epictetus: her habitual headaches were the consequence of early and severe study. Keep the book by you, and read it at leisure. I am, very much yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXLIX.

TO MRS. HOOK.

10. Coates Crescent, Edinburgh,
23d May, 1832.

My dear Friend,

I have just bid adieu to Brae House, and you cannot imagine what the divorce has cost me; it was as large as I should wish, and its respectable air and its size were quite suited to me: it had only one fault, being too like myself,—too old and unfashionable.

Well, here I am in a house much finer, much larger, nearly new, and in a fashionable part of the town, yet bewildered, and not feeling at home by any means. This is wrong; the house suits my son, and I shall like it by-and-by: every body else is delighted with it.

I send you a little spark from a lambent flame that you might imagine age had extinguished. I sent it anonymously to the young Duc de Bordeaux, and am quite amused with the conjectures at Holyrood about the author. I am, dear friend, yours, affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LINES SENT TO THE YOUNG DUC DE BORDEAUX, THEN RESIDING AT HOLYROOD HOUSE.

"The expectation and rose of the fair state."— *Hamlet.*

I.

O were I but a Scottish boy,
To roam o'er Scotia's hills of wind,
To share the shepherd's simple joy,
And trust to bosoms true and kind.

II.

To view those splendid scenes no more
Where treason lurks with murd'rous guile,
And virtue lives but to deplore
The guilt that lurks beneath a smile.

III.

O shield me in your shelt'ring arms,
Ye dryads of yon ancient wood,
And soothe my soul with nature's charms,
Where naiads pour the mountain flood.

IV.

Amidst those peaceful scenes be mine
To muse in solitude profound;
And trace with awe the hand divine,
That rais'd those rocky barriers round.

V.

A spark still lingers in my breast,
That yet perhaps may burst in flame,
Could I sustain the high behest
I owe to an illustrious name.

VI.

Could I, like British Alfred, rise,
Through paths obscure, to glory's height.
The brave, the worthy, and the wise
Record and bless his deeds of might.

VII.

My spirit kindles at his name,
No words his just renown can paint;
Conspicuous in the rolls of fame
As Patriot, Hero, King, and Saint.

VIII.

He struck his harp; the warbling wire
Responded sweet to themes divine;
A monarch's voice, a seraph's fire
Did with those hallow'd notes combine.

IX.

From Dalecarlia's dusky mine
Gustavus burst indignant forth,
To claim his rightful crown, and shine
The star and glory of the North.

X.

O who could rest in shades obscure,
Last of a long time-honour'd line,
While names so sacred and so pure,
Inspiring emulation, shine.

XI.

High from his bright ethereal sphere
The sainted Lewis looking down,
Methinks I see in vision clear,
Pointing my way to reach a crown.

LETTER CCCL.

TO MRS. IZETT.

My dear Friend, 10. Coates Crescent, 26th June.

Do not come to see me just now, for I know by your silence that you have been very unwell. So have I; but you could do *me* no good, and might hurt your cold, — so every thing is called that we cannot exactly name. We sensitive people, though doomed in the hour of actual suffering "to smart and agonise at every pore," have a compensation assigned to us in an elasticity of spirit that rises to our aid when nature

seems to be unequal to the contest. This is like aiming at fine reasoning, and thereby wandering into absurdity. It is better to conclude at once that the God who formed us, infinitely wise, and unspeakably merciful in his dealings with the creatures whom he has appointed to be perfected through suffering here, and saved through faith in a Redeemer hereafter, — has so constituted them that their faculties and feelings, their sufferings and enjoyments, are so balanced and adjusted that they do not, on the whole, diminish their appointed portion of good in this world, nor obstruct their way to a better.

I have lately received intelligence of the death of my respected friend Sir William Grant, the late Master of the Rolls, one of the most valuable characters that benefited society by his conduct and example, and who was to me more than a brother. To him I was proud of being obliged, though I was not at liberty to say so while he lived. He indeed—

> "Sank to rest,
> By all his country's wishes blest."

Even the rancour of party never attacked his spotless name.

Give my best regards to your best friend, and tell him or your niece to send a line by the post to say how you are. Affectionately yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLI.

TO HER SON, AT THE REV. DR. MACKAY'S, DUNOON.

Edinburgh, 24th July, 1832.

My dear John,

I depended on hearing from you whenever you arrived at your present abode. I confess that my extreme solicitude was unreasonable, yet it was to such excess that it affected me in every possible way. I trust my gratitude will be as deep as my anxieties were. I think your Highland excursion with your Reverend friend must have had a balmy influence over your mind; — such beautiful scenery, inhabited by such pure and gentle spirits, does not often occur: the primitive manners and modest enjoyment of abundance you describe in the family you visited reminds me of what I have heard of Switzerland, before it was spoilt by the English travellers. Your secluded minister will find his heart warmed, and his mind occupied, when he begins to be well known and beloved by his parishioners, and gets a deserving mate — that first of worldly blessings.

I am most anxious to know whether you bathe. Does the sea agree with you? do you occupy your mind with a cheerful and grateful view of the prospects before you? do you comprehend the force of that maxim — "To enjoy is to obey?" Persevere in prayer, and let it be the prayer of faith. This temporary indisposition is in all probability appointed not merely as a correction, but as a trial of your trust

and dependance on Him who is all-powerful and all-merciful. Be patient, and cherish a humble trust in the promises that never deceived. The heart sickness of hope delayed is a human weakness which the divine compassion only can remove: that must be diligently sought. The short hourly supplication recommended by Bishop Taylor is easy; but beware of supposing merit in our weak endeavours.

We have just heard an account of your good Doctor's austerity which I do not entirely credit; namely, that he has revived the strictness of ancient discipline by excommunicating all the parties engaged in the late riots at Dunoon. I have, however, a version of my own, according to which your Reverend friend gave them a reproof of wholesome bitterness proportioned to the crime, but reserved excommunication for still graver offences. I can only add my kind regards to the Doctor and his mate, and the unnecessary assurance that you are the dearest thing on earth to

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLII.

TO HER SON, AT DUNOON.

Edinburgh, 29th July, 1832.

My dear Son,

I have followed all your steps and enjoyed all your enjoyments. Be humble, be patient, be thankful for intervals of improved health, and hope humbly for more!—

> "To hope the best is pious, brave, and wise,
> And may itself procure what it presumes."

I know Dr. W. of Glasgow a little, and know him to be all you describe. You will observe that though we of the intellectual city profess to be, and perhaps are, better bred and more refined, our western friends have more cordiality of manner, and are better informed, than any set of merely commercial people in the world. News I have little, and that of a mixed complexion: the best is that Dr. Morehead has just got an excellent rectory in Yorkshire,—seven hundred a year, with a comfortable, well-disposed peasantry, and most desirable neighbours.

I was not surprised to hear of poor Maconochie's departure, for I saw death in his face when he called last; and he complained that he was much worse than usual. How calmly might we look forward to our last hours were our lives as pure and our faith as firm as his. Never was a frail child of humanity more free from all guile, malice, and hypocrisy; his benevolence was pained at hearing any one blamed, however justly.

I must tell you of the most delightful Americans I ever saw, who have been like a sunbeam to me. It is years since I have had so much pleasure in talking to strangers, such an exertion having lately become a task to me. Mr. and Mrs. Horace Gray* are people whom you would really delight in: you love sound sense, in which they both excel. Mrs. G. is very beautiful, and has enthusiasm too, but it is of a refined and gentle kind: they are, both, intellectual and well informed, — not a shadow of Yankee-land about them in language or manners.

God bless you, my dear son: I am going to sleep in my chair, but shall first put up a petition for you, my all and my only.

ANNE GRANT

LETTER CCCLIII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 19th September, 1832.

After thanking you for your letter, for which I became unreasonably impatient, I can only bestow my *tediousness* upon you, being lost in a dense cloud of stupidity ever since my son's departure for the Continent. All this is unreasonable and unthankful; and it would save you the trouble of blaming me if you did but know how much I blamed myself. I think my son must have had some presentiment of this depression, for, when going away, he earnestly begged that I would go to the country in his ab-

* Of Boston, New England.

sence, and pointed out a pleasant place on the sea-shore, near Queensferry, that had struck his fancy. I was going to take it, but found it pre-occupied. We have therefore arranged to go to-morrow to Inverleithen, a quiet vale in a pastoral country, surrounded with low grassy hills, and divided by the Tweed throughout its course. I may, perhaps, on its banks share the feeling of Bowles, when he said, —

> "The murmurs of thy wand'ring wave below
> Seem to my ear the pity of a friend."

Inverleithen, 24th September.

Here I am, very much pleased with the aspect of every thing round me, and more particularly with the sun, for diffusing so much heat and splendour on me and on the Tweed, now much increased in the romantic interest it has long possessed.

I am almost ashamed, after boasting so much of the beauties and advantages of Blawlowan last year, to tell you that I find here a retreat better than the best. You must not laugh, nor even smile, at me as a determined optimist: there are not many ancient optimists, and very few to whom the disposition to be pleased was so necessary as to a mind tried by successive sorrows like mine. It is a cordial afforded in pity to a deeply-wounded mind.

I am quite at a loss how to describe this place; the general aspect of it is already known to you. I must first tell you how we took a maid and travelling wardrobe and library, and alighted at a very good inn here at two o'clock. Mary Maccoll then walked out in search of lodgings, and quickly found one beyond our hopes, in a good new house, most

agreeably situated, over which presides a very pretty lady-like person, — so much so that I was ashamed to speak of accommodations to one so much genteeler than myself, though without the least assumption. This is a widely-scattered village, containing many good houses, but all at a respectable distance from each other: the whole aspect of the place is peaceful and cheerful, and almost as pretty as Mrs. Boyd, the lady of our house, who, I presume, is a good manager, for she has half a dozen children, not at all so noisy as mice, and a husband equally quiet, and such rooms as you might envy at a watering-place. This is not a valley, nor a plain, nor a flat of any kind; it is a large circular space finely undulated, partially wooded, and divided by the Tweed. It is enclosed by a circle of the finest formed green hills imaginable, which we should call high if they were not on all sides surmounted by mountains that look down, in barren dignity, on their green slopes and their thousands of sheep; for you are to know that this is a sheep country, though there is much tillage and planting around, and much of that improvement going on so fatal to broomy braes and whinny banks. I fancy you are by this time satisfied with my shadowy uncertain picture of Inverleithen.

I suppose that your attention is still much devoted to your amiable son-in-law, whose countenance always gave me the idea of animated benevolence and constitutional happiness. One is apt to consider serenity and cheerfulness inseparable from health: that was not the case with him, however. Paley's Theology has been to me a treasure of instruction

and delight: the concluding chapter on the Goodness of God is invaluable, especially where he speaks of the alleviations afforded to those who suffer under the most painful diseases, and the compensation of delight which results from the first interval of ease. My imperfect recollection injures the subject; but on lately reading his life by his son, his faith and patience appeared more exalted when I found that this testimony to the Diyine goodness, in affording support, was written in the few intervals of ease afforded during a dreadful disorder, which proved fatal not long after. I am, as ever, yours, most affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLIV.

TO MRS. HOOK.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 28th November, 1832.

I have lately returned home, after being, for some weeks, sequestered in a kind of Patmos that was much to my taste in its sober autumnal dress. What between the many families I have had commerce with, and an endless cousinship of Grants and Stewarts on both sides, I can hardly go any where without meeting many to whom I am known. In Tweeddale alone I am an entire stranger; and I arrived at Inverleithen as at some foreign village, unheeded and unknown. I had my very com-

panionable young cousin with me; and my friend Miss Gordon joined me in two days after. Mary and I, and our handmaid, alighted at the inn, ordered dinner, and, whenever it was over, Mary walked out, and, entering the best house she saw, asked for lodgings, and got very good ones. We sat down directly to tea with all the home-like ease imaginable, and liked every thing and every body that we saw about us.

Be it known that Inverleithen is a watering-place of growing reputation, with two salubrious springs of various qualities, which, having never tasted, I cannot describe. The principal inn calls itself St. Ronan's; and the mistress, in common parlance, is called Meg Dods, and seems to inherit the virtues of that mirror of landladies, for she never suffers riot, or the excess that leads to it, in her house. We lived in the librarian's house, dignified by the name of Marmion Place. We owed our tranquillity entirely to the season having closed, many that know me having left the place the day before I arrived. Inverleithen is literally a dale, a distinguished part of pastoral Tweeddale, where you are soothed by the musical murmurs of the Tweed and the softer flow of the Leithen. The country is completely pastoral: you are almost entirely encircled by green hills that slope easily — I am almost tempted to say gracefully — to the plain; and those hills are white over with sheep. Then beyond these green hills rises an outer circle of brown picturesque

> "Mountains on whose barren breast
> The labouring clouds delight to rest

Every thing had begun to look sober and autumnal; but while

> " A brownest horror shaded all the woods,
> A hoarser murmur sounded from the floods; "

for then the pride of our country was approaching to death. Much has been said of Sir Walter Scott's genius, and of the virtues of his spotless life; but you must have known him personally to appreciate the charm of his simplicity of manners, his ever good humour, and that sound sense and genuine truth, — that unostentatious yet ever-waking benevolence. Then, in his conversation he never dazzled, but always delighted you; it was always original, yet the sense of it was for the time lost in the easy quietness of his manner, consistent at the same time with perfect good breeding. He seemed always more disposed to please and amuse than to shine: you met him with the impression that you ought to look up to him, but, ere you were aware, you found yourself on even ground with him, and wondered afterwards to find you had been so perfectly at your ease.

My son has just returned from the Continent: he went there to meet some friends, and was nearly tempted to proceed to Rome with them, but was overtaken at Florence by letters from home, indicating an absolute necessity for his return by the time of the opening of the courts here.

I have many questions to ask you, but the sun is sinking, and I do not write with candle-light. I have just enough remaining of daylight to tell you that we were all delighted with your friends the Miss Wards; and that I am indeed yours, unchangeably,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLV.

TO MRS. HOOK.

My dear kind Friend, Edinburgh, 17th January, 1838.

Among many things which I have to regret, in these troublous times, is the loss of my good friend Sir Charles Forbes's kind offices in franking my letters: he often went so far as to write to my correspondents to address their letters to me under his cover. I am only lamenting a lost privilege, and the loss of a faithful and honourable friend to the good cause which he so long supported, and not by any means making an apology for that postage which I know you will gladly pay, to hear good tidings of the friend so long endeared to you by so many sorrows and much suffering, which, in this world of trial, are the true seals of friendship. And now, my dear friend, where shall my congratulations begin or end for all the blessings poured out upon you? I do not doubt of the ardour of your pious gratitude; but I too am grateful for you, and take pleasure in thinking over the many blessings that are clustering round you. The chief of these I consider being the mother of a son so faithfully devoted to his Master's service, — so able and so willing to impress truths the most solemn and sublime with the efficacy of deep feeling and thorough conviction upon his hearers. I trust his doctrine will have the effect of turning many to righteousness; and that what comes so evidently from his own heart will be followed with a blessing, and reach the hearts of many others.

Your residence at the Lakes last season, I think, must have exceeded all you expected from it: besides all the pleasures of fine scenery, you must have enjoyed the most refined of luxuries — those of intellect — in a higher degree than you could have met with any where else, — so quiet, pure, and unmingled with the froth and feculence, as Dr. Young calls it, of artificial, that is, fashionable life. I am not sure that you were aware of what a personage you had among you in Tom Hamilton: such is his familiar appellation here. He is a witty, ingenious, and high-talented Tory: his brother, Sir William, is a Whig, but a most amiable and respectable one, — deeply learned, unworldly, and both humble and high-minded. As for Tom Hamilton, the resources of his mind, the brilliancy of his wit, and the play of his fancy, are quite uncommon. "Cyril Thornton" is certainly a work of great ability, though by no means what I should have expected from him.

How do the living portraits of the unequalled monarch, in his own department, the lamented Sir Walter, throw other writers into unapproachable distance. What an object to contemplate was his spotless life, the mild lustre of his virtues, and chastened splendour of his genius! His death, in nobleness of sentiment and uprightness of purpose, was worthy of his life, yet grievous to those who loved him. Poor Byron! how different a person would he have been, had his heart been opened and softened towards others of his fellow-creatures, as it was to that great and good man, whom he revered and loved; but it was with an exclusive love: surrounded as

he was with all that could corrupt his morals and harden his heart, he thought of him as the only good and virtuous man.

I may truly say that "death's dread dart is ever in my sight." Every second day brings an intimation of some person younger than myself summoned to their grave,—some, alas! in the bloom of youth, and others in the prime of manhood. Under these impressions, I think of our meeting here, next year, as a pleasing dream: if my lengthened life should be mercifully prolonged till then, it will be a much-valued cordial to my decline. I speak of the extension of life as a merciful boon, hoping that I shall be enabled to use it as I ought,—to prepare for that state of existence where, through the merits of my Redeemer, I may hope to meet those whose memory is so dear to me.

I wish to know whether you have read Southey's "Colloquies," and how you like them.—But here comes sober evening gray, so gray that I can go on no longer, only to send my love to dear Eliza, the same to Georgiana, and thanks to Mr. Davidson for his visit. Farewell, dear friend: I will go on to dream of our meeting in Coates Crescent. Yours, unalterably,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLVI.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 26th January, 1833.

I had no letter to send by your sons, which I was sorry for; not that I think you grudge postage, but I grudge myself encroaching on your charity fund, for I suppose all your privy purse to be so applied. Every second day at least brings me the notice of a death among my juniors in the midst of useful and amiable lives. James Ballantyne has not long outlived his distinguished patron*; but before that deprivation he met with a heart wound from the death of an excellent wife. She was no ordinary character; without the least pretension or affectation, her mind and manners were evidently improved by the advantages she possessed in the polished and intellectual society to which she was introduced. Poor Ballantyne never was himself since her death: he has left three daughters and a son, the three eldest of an age to require more particularly a parent's care, and I fear but moderately provided with this world's goods.

My son brought me, the other day, a volume, which I read with much interest; it is the Obituary for 1832, which is to me a very interesting, and ought to be a very instructive book,—so many of those whom I have been accustomed to esteem and admire gone before me; and of those I knew personally there are

* Mr. Ballantyne was the printer of Sir Walter Scott's works.

memoirs of the distinguished lives of Sir William Grant, Sir James Macintosh, Crabbe, and the unequalled Sir Walter. What a procession called before me, while I linger here like Athelstane the Unready! I do not know if I mentioned to you before a saying of the late Robert Hall of Leicester, that sunk deeply in my mind: he did not, like the people of the Row heresy, think that all the heirs of salvation had a full assurance of their future happiness before the tie was broken that bound the immortal spirit to its clay tenement. He says, "I am not conscious of any such certainty; I have only a dim and transient hope, that appears and vanishes; yet, feeble as it is, I would not give it up for all the world contains."

I perfectly comprehend your daughter's situation. She has, like Young, found "death's gallery her appointed walk," even without "sick hope's pale lamp its only glimmering ray." She has cause to be thankful for many reprieves. To part with so beloved and so delightful a companion must be a severe stroke, however long delayed; but to think that what made all her earthly happiness has been even thus long continued to her, and that she is still blest with health of body and firmness of mind to support her through those labours of love, is no small cause of thankfulness. This cloud has hung long; but how few clouds have darkened your horizon for years past! I am, my dear friend, yours, affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

Letter CCCLVII.

TO A FRIEND IN AMERICA.

Edinburgh, 10th April, 1833.

My dear Friend,

I very much wish that my last letter may have arrived safe; for such is the failing of my once good memory that I cannot recollect when, or by whom, I sent it. I was very much concerned for your nephew's loss of his wife, knowing how entirely domestic his habits are, and how accomplished and companionable a partner he found in her. It is an aggravation of this misfortune to have lost his little girls at the age when children usually begin to be pleasant and intelligent; it must have been like a renewal of deep and recent grief. I have quite old-fashioned Scotch feelings about such matters; that is, I am not very indulgent to widows marrying again, especially if they have children. But with a man the whole system of life is broken up if he loses a beloved wife; he has none of the petty occupations with which a woman's time and thoughts are filled up; and his housekeeper, though in perfect innocence, obtains an undue sway over him, and the decline of life seems dark and cheerless. I would have every man marry again, after the full tribute of sorrow has been paid. There is a singular circumstance which I and much wiser people have sometimes observed in second marriages; that a man having (as I have known) a most excellent wife, of whose merits he seemed quite sensible, was, notwithstanding, full

master of his house, and ruled absolutely; but afterwards marrying a woman in manners and understanding very inferior, seemed far more led (I would almost say ruled) by her than by her more deserving predecessor. I suppose the weaker vessels are fonder of power, and use more little arts to obtain it, than the class of superior minds, who know their due and ask no more.

It is time to tell you of my son's marriage, which took place in London three weeks ago.* I have rational grounds for supposing that my young people's happiness will be lasting. They have known each other so well and so long: she looks up to her husband as a person of worth and acquirements; and he does ample justice to her pure and delicate mind, which, from the retirement in which she was brought up, is untainted by the world. I languished for a daughter, and have found one who has loved me from childhood: I feel such a calm, such a sense of safety, now that my son's happiness is secured; I have not for a long time been so tranquil.

* * * * * *

Indeed, all we poor old-fashioned Tories are not a little disturbed by these ill-boding reforms: an absolute king could not alarm you more than those enemies of the Church, the throne, and the aristocracy do us. It seems a prevailing opinion that a new republic is much better than an old broken-down monarchy, with all its forms and none of its essentials.

* Mr. J. P. Grant was married in March, 1833, to Miss Margaret Steven, daughter of the late M. Steven, Esq. of Polmadie, Renfrewshire.

There was a time that America was to us what Moab was to the Israelites—a place where our people, much in need of washing, went for shelter: but matters are so changed now, that our best people, and those we are most reluctant to part with, are attracted by the boundless space and endless capabilities of America. The very interesting pair from whom you will receive this are of that number. The Rev. Mr. Urquhart was brought up to our Church, and from his learning, principles, and abilities, was considered as a most promising youth, and likely to adorn his profession; but the parish in his own country, on which he set his heart, was bestowed on another not more deserving. He had long a great partiality for your new world, which the unsettled state of matters here rather increased; and has taken a resolution, though his friends and relations here are numerous and respectable, to preach the Gospel to the inhabitants of some of those new cities which are daily rising in your fertile wilderness.

One word of Mrs. Trollope. Sixty years ago, I think that the back settlers of America spoke pretty much as she describes them; but there has been a great time to improve since, and I can hardly think they are still so uncouth. Differing widely from her in general, in one particular I am of an opposite way of thinking entirely: I am a great friend to early marriages; and when people cannot immediately arrive at all the pomp, pride, and circumstance of glorious housekeeping, I think their boarding till their affairs admit of setting up perfectly amiable. How much is affection curbed in this country, and

how much happiness delayed by the ambition for style!

Write soon, my dear friend. I feel your friendship as a valued relic of those that are gone where I must soon follow. I am yours, with much regard and esteem,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLVIII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Inverleithen, 27th August, 1833.

My dear Friend,

I have seldom been so long without acknowledging a letter of yours; but you must make allowance for a social and versatile person engrossed by the gaieties of a watering-place, and making a very large figure daily at the Pump-room! Seriously, my infirmities seem daily increasing. When I was here, last year, I used to move about a good deal on my wooden supporters, and to have a chair with me to sit down when I grew tired. *Now*, though I have a garden under the window, and every possible inducement to go out, I am so unwieldy, from my increased bulk, that I move with difficulty and some danger. We have my favourite, Rosa Ilderton, with us, of whom my daughter is as fond as myself.

We came here just the day the Border sports began, which produced a gay scene of rural exercises and festivity, lasting two days, and attended by many

carriages of one kind or another. I suppose you will easily dispense with the details even of the silver arrow of the victor. I did not go out of doors, nor was that any act of self-denial, for the very pretty enclosure where those amusements were conducted lay just below one of our windows. My gratification lay in seeing so many decent, happy-looking people. The peasantry of this truly pastoral country are so well conducted, and have so much the cheerful look of health and the comforts of life, that it is a pleasure to see them in their best attire, cheered by the presence of their liberal and indulgent landlords. There were many people at the Wells, of whom we knew nothing, though several friends, civil and military, called on us on the festal days; and after the interruption of the bad weather many somebodies have appeared, and claimed acquaintance with us.

But I must now tell you of my travels. I had always a foolish romantic wish to see the Yarrow, which, notwithstanding, I thought most unlikely that I should. We were, however, persuaded one day lately to go to its parent stream, St. Mary's Lake, where all was a bright and solemn solitude; for never was day more sunny and mountains more heathery and treeless: a few scattered birches about the lake were a rest to the eye. Returning, we thought proper to call at Altrive to visit my old acquaintance the Ettrick Shepherd; and I was there, to my great annoyance, driven through the individual Yarrow that I had dreamt of so long: the bottom ought to have been smooth gravel, but it proved such great stones as produced a concussion not very suitable to

my shattered frame; yet I was glad we went. Altrive is just such a place as you fancy for the abode of a gentle shepherd; the house quite comfortable looking, — better than you would expect, — sheltered by a few tall trees, and standing on a most pastoral, indeed very pretty, knowe, with a very extensive view; a comely crop, beginning to look yellow, below, and the Yarrow nearly circling round it; a useful garden, not without flowers, nor wholly without weeds, and rather more thistles blooming on the brae than you would have tolerated. But the shepherd has little of that "retired leisure that in trim gardens takes his pleasure;" consequently the place looks as if it had been made on purpose for him. He is an inveterate fisher; and the Yarrow is inexhaustible. He sees more company than any gentleman in the country, not a few from England, and many from Glasgow. We had a cordial invitation to stay dinner, but my purpose to see him and his comely, sensible-looking wife was sufficiently answered by this call. . . . . .

You will wonder, and perhaps lament, to see the things of time make such a lively impression on one so near the brink of "a dread eternity so surely mine;" yet, believe me, I seem to take a farewell glance at such objects, for certainly the late attacks of illness which I have had are warnings not to be neglected. I know I have your prayers: God grant that they may prove effectual. Adieu, dear faithful friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLIX.

TO MRS. IZETT.

Inverleithen, 29th August, 1833.

My dear Friend,

This rainy day encourages me to write, from the impossibility of doing any thing else, but still more from having heard that you continued much indisposed. I have been haunted with a vision of you ever since. When the change which breaks off all earthly ties draws so near to me in particular, why should I be so desirous of being remembered and even regretted? —

> "On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
> Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
> E'en from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
> E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires."

This may be, certainly is, obscure to the eye, but not so to the heart, which acknowledges the meaning it conveys. I have as great reason to be satisfied as it is possible for a person who has lived so long, and outlived so many and so much; I have had so much to suffer that I know not how I should have borne it if I had not had so much to do. The power by which those sufferings were inflicted no doubt prescribed the remedy. It was, like most remedies, not palatable, but it proved effectual: difficulties of various kinds rose in succession, but I was always enabled to conquer them; and to a mind the least energetic there is an enjoyment in conquering difficulties. I have now no care of any kind; every

hope is fulfilled, every wish is anticipated. But with this there is a sense of insignificance: strenuously endeavouring all my life to serve, or at least to please, I feel as if I could now do neither. My health is generally good, yet my infirmities increase daily; I walk with much greater difficulty than formerly; and, owing to my incapacity to take exercise, I have grown large and unwieldy.

When I think of you, which I do right often, I also think of Mrs. Vesey and Mrs. Hancock; — the first all ethereal spirit, the mind seeming about to work its way through the attenuated tenement; while Mrs. Hancock, all health, tranquillity, and sound common sense, had all useful faculties securely shrouded in an ample covering of solid though animated clay. The consequence was, you remember, that Mrs. V. was called "soul," and Mrs. H. "body." You have certainly all the appearance of a soul that over-animates its clay; while I look like one not overburdened with thought unless about my dinner: yet you are not so far all soul as to be quite detached from terrestrial objects, and can descend quietly from the higher flights of the mind to attend to Mr. Izett having a comfortable dinner; while I, with all my superabundant breadth and rotundity, can be at times wafted on the wings of imagination "beyond the visible diurnal sphere."

We have taken advantage of the late fine weather to see as much of the neighbourhood of this beautiful district as possible; and Abbotsford has been included in our excursions. But I must first tell you that I have a nephew, Peter Stuart, a worthy, warm-hearted,

honourable man, who has a considerable mercantile establishment in Malta, where he resided many years. He came here for a few days, and contrived somehow to get a barouchè, and insisted on our going with him to Melrose and Abbotsford. It is now thirteen years since I paid a short visit there, and I was then so engrossed by the presiding genius of the place, that I had little attention to give to details, having only a general notion that there was much of what was curious and characteristic of the owner. With all this previous knowledge I was overawed on entering it. I viewed the outside as I would a mausoleum consecrated to virtue and genius; it is so utterly unlike any other place or building, that I shall not attempt a description: of the contents within I feel equally inadequate to give you an idea. I have seen fine and great houses, but prefer the sight of this to them all: there is no porter's lodge, no extensive lawn, none of the appurtenances of a fine mansion; but the spirit of the owner seems to live and move: every thing speaks to the mind and to the heart. Numberless memorials of the brave, the wise, and good, call up the past, and evince the regard with which that great mind cherished the memory of the illustrious dead. All the furniture bears the stamp of antiquity; every thing you see suggests some new train of thought,—more especially the pictures, which are not many but select, each having its distinct history. Among those, I took a deep interest in a recent one of Miss Anne Scott. Few families exhibit such instances of two individuals nearly at the same time falling victims to duty: the father died in

the cause of honour and integrity; the daughter in the no less sacred one of filial duty, which, with her, absorbed every other feeling. She lived only for her father, to watch over him with the tenderest solicitude, and to screen him from unfeeling intrusion: for this alone she lived, and died when her task was finished:—

> "Farewell blest spirits; vain the praise we give,
> The praise you sought from lips immortal flows;
> Farewell those virtues which deserve to live,—
> Deserve a nobler bliss than life bestows!"

Rainy weather and perfect leisure have made me very liberal of my tediousness to you: it is all I have to give. With every good wish to your kind and constant mate, believe me, yours, cordially,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLX.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 29th January, 1834.

My very dear Friend,

When I wrote to you last I committed a great fault, and was most impatient to repair it; indeed the recollection has made me uneasy every day since. I mean the undue flippancy—I could almost say bitterness—with which I mentioned a friend of yours, and I believe, thinking back on the past, a very amiable person. . . . . .

Your new friend, Mrs. Forster, I know to be the

daughter of the wise and pious Henry Thornton, and of one of the most elegant and distinguished women I ever beheld, whose worth and piety were pre-eminent. Mr. and Mrs. Thornton visited Edinburgh, with their daughter, many years since. Miss Thornton, a fine girl, well educated, but quite unspoilt, much of my Anne's age, (and what an age of innocence and truth that was) carried a charm about her that had attraction indescribable: it was not wit, it was not beauty; something far more valuable than these. She and Anne, in their native sweetness and untainted simplicity, seemed to meet like creatures of another world, and to feel delight in each other's society from similarity of principles and feelings. The Thorntons were hurried out of town, and I never saw them more, but retained much reverence for him, and still think of her as something unearthly. Do tell me if Mrs. Forster was the very young girl I speak of that came with her parents to Edinburgh many years ago. I often saw and greatly approved the young pure-minded Sir Robert and Lady Inglis; I thought them sweet, artless young creatures, earnestly desirous to improve themselves and each other: but when I heard of them making the young Thorntons "the children of their souls," I loved them with no common love, and have done so ever since. He has walked steadily in a straight and open path: no matter about his reward; if it comes not now it will come hereafter.

Yes, I have read Mr. Hamilton's Travels in the United States, and think the book invaluable to the Americans; he administers exactly the medicine they

require, and he will be abused for it: it will, however, do good here, and there, and every where. Have you read Dr. Chalmers's splendid, and, I greatly fear, last speech? He was three hours on his feet, and has been ever since very ill: I hear he is now better. He is too credulous, and has too much genius to be rational about daily matters, but he is perfectly disinterested, and without guile, malice, or hypocrisy; therefore I love him with all his romance and tiresome political economy: I hate the depopulating cold-hearted name of that science, if it be one. Write to me very soon. I am impatient to hear of your niece; and am truly and cordially yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXI.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 12th March, 1834.

My dear Friend,

It is now more than a month since the date of your letter by your reverend friend Mr. R——, which I only received yesterday, and answer, as you see, very promptly. I have the kindest and politest note from Mrs. R.: ill health on her side, and a crowd of occupations on his, prevented their coming here hitherto. Variable, but, I rather fear, very broken health, keeps them in fear and concern for each other; and I am well aware what a life of

harassment and interruption they must lead. I am convinced that Mr. R.'s merits are fully estimated by his hearers and by the world in general, without a dissenting voice. Even in this singular case, he, who is literally

> "Belov'd, admir'd, ador'd,
> His life with endless prayers implor'd,"

runs so great a risk of being stifled with ill-judged kindness, and officious obtrusion, that his infirm health shields him from many of the petty evils that embitter and wear out life. We are all born to suffer; but this servant of God finds in the depth of his piety, and the consciousness of doing faithfully his Master's work, a constant resource.

I have so many things to say that I must confine myself to three, at present, engrossing subjects. First, I wish you not to be deceived with the Malthusian nonsense and impiety, which, by-the-by, has blinded the eyes of many wiser and better than me: more's the pity. Then I wish to show you the folly and danger of what are called novels in high life, which at best tell too many tales out of school,—the school of idleness, fashion, and vanity, meretricious taste, and relaxed morals; they all send me back to Miss Austin with an increased admiration. What was meant first shall be last,—the marriage of Lady Townshend Farquhar with Mr. Hamilton.* He stands very high with me already, having always lived in an atmosphere of honour, virtue, and talents. To his first wife he was a tender husband, and lived with her and for her,

* Thomas Hamilton, Esq., author of "Cyril Thornton," and "Men and Manners in America." He died in Italy in 1843.

while she did live; and mourned her loss, I have been told, most sincerely: his life has, I believe, been respectable, and his family patrician, ancient, and unblemished. I know little of Lady Townshend Farquhar, but that she made a good wife to your brother, and eminently a kind sister to yourself, for which you were very grateful. I shall long to hear from you after this hasty epistle; and am, as ever, yours, with much affection,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXII.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 17th April, 1834.

Now, my dear friend, your kind letter, and its valuable enclosure, have given me so many interesting topics of discussion while franks are to me unattainable, that I must cram all my usual tediousness into narrow bounds, that we may meet as usual on topics most interesting to us both.

I am highly pleased with both the spirit and execution of Walter's sermon. It appears to me closely reasoned, and as having the sound doctrine it contains so founded on reason, and fortified by Scripture authority, that even he who runs may read to profit. The late daring attacks by the enemies of the Church will, I hope, call forth much zeal for the truth, and lead many hitherto careless persons to think more deeply on the most important of all concerns. I am grieved, yet not afraid of this ungodly war with every

thing that is sacred and venerable: surely the wrath of man shall praise Him, and the remainder of wrath shall He restrain. The worst times for the Church that we read of were the latter years of Charles the Second; yet what distinguished ornaments of the Church and witnesses of the truth were raised up at the time when popery, profligacy, and infidelity seemed to triumph. The best account I have seen of those eminent saints is in the Memoirs of Evelyn, which it always does me good to read.

Have you been reading Crabbe's life, which has interested us all very much? One cannot know enough about Burke: what a guardian angel he proved to the nation. There are two individuals who have adorned and benefited our country, whom it is a pleasure to trace into the very recesses of private life: there are no discoveries to make;—all is so fair, so clear, so honourable—the milk of human kindness flows forth so abundantly. I speak of Edmund Burke and Walter Scott. How delightful it is to find those diamonds without a flaw. It seems to me unnatural to find those excellent of the earth, on whom the most precious gifts of intellect are bestowed, deficient in moral virtues. Alas for poor Lord Byron!—he had such a thorough conviction of Sir Walter's being all and more than he seemed, that he used to say, if he found half a dozen more such characters it would light up his mind with a belief of human virtue. How painful it is to think of what he was and what he might have been.

I think this letter, betwixt prosing and gossiping, tastes strongly of fourscore. I know well you cannot

regard me more than you have ever done; but I trust you will venerate me more when I have entered on a year that has *memento mori* so deeply written on it. My son and his wife are very careful of me, and do all they can to soften the sense of increasing infirmity; and I trust it is good for them to have a duty to perform. Now do not stand on a frank when you see me so hardened on that head; but I shall manage better next time. What a strange antiquity you will think me when you see me next, for you see I take it for granted that you will find me still alive; meanwhile tell Georgiana how glad I shall be to see her and you: in heart, however, you will find unaltered your faithful friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXIII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 22d April, 1834.

My dear Friend,

I have been longing to write to you again, and feel still an apprehension that you are giving way to those assumptions of superior attainments in piety in others, which we find scarcely compatible with that humility which is the very foundation of real Christianity. I do by no means admire ladies carrying the Bible in their reticules, or rejecting as superfluous the light which the wise and good, that are now reaping the fruit of their labours in a blessed immortality, have

endeavoured to throw over the Scriptures. Those who think themselves all-sufficient to comprehend what so many holy men have approached with reverential fear, and given perhaps a lifetime to elucidate, with the assistance of that Divine Spirit for which they earnestly implored, and this independence of our ancient guides, as thinking the Scriptures all-sufficient, is a mere deception for rejecting the lights by which the Christian world has been hitherto directed. These persons are as dependant upon their own teachers, and receive their dictates more implicitly than ever we did those of the holy men whom we had been taught to look up to as spiritual guides. To have the Scriptures laid up in the heart, and influencing the heart and conduct, would be just as well as carrying them about: neither Lady Rachel Russell nor Hannah More, nor any other of those illustrious women that did honour to Christianity and their country, ever carried about a Bible as a spell to protect them, or as a Catholic relic.

I think I could, by means of a most retentive memory, produce as much Scripture, and apply it as readily, as any of those will-worshippers. But in this respect I keep myself continually in check, well knowing that this acquaintance with Scripture, and ready application of it, is no proof of an advance in grace beyond, or at all equal to, many others, but is perhaps a mere effort of memory, for the effects of which I am responsible according to the use I make of it, which I greatly fear has not been commensurate to my knowledge. I say what I think to you under a dread of doing wrong; but I can only tell

you in sincerity what my own habits of thinking and feeling have been, both with regard to religious concerns, and to matters merely of taste and talent. My father was a very pious man; but his views of religion, and indeed all his other views, were severe and gloomy: this was matter of temperament, aggravated by indifferent health. I was early and deeply impressed with my own deficiencies both in faith and practice; and may truly say that I was deeply humbled in consequence. I looked up with reverence to every creature that appeared to me more zealous and earnest than myself in devotion, and lived in a state of self-accusing terror that was really pitiable. But I then had, and still have, a hope that I shall know that my Redeemer liveth, before I go hence and be no more seen. Yet I am grieved to find in some high professors, and in those who are rather boldly termed advanced Christians, such inconsistencies, such a want of candour and charity, as makes me at a loss how to estimate these professions. This produces a painful distrust both of myself and others: I accuse myself of having less reverence for high professors than formerly, and considering some of them as self-righteous and uncharitable; while I find others who have walked softly under the same fears and doubts as myself more constant and upright. I think that the hostility now shown to the Church, and to religion itself, should have the good effect of making all Christians tremble for the ark, which is attacked on all sides, and by none more than separatists, who set up a higher standard of morals

and piety, not very consistent with the bitterness with which they regard the National Church.

I find you have been staying at Jordanhill. What pleasant circuits you may make among your good and affectionate children. The flourishing state of every branch of your family is a subject of gratulation to me and many others certainly; yet when I hear it spoken of, I always say that the moderation with which it is borne is the circumstance that ought to be most gratifying to your friends. Be sure to remind your grand-daughter Isabella how I have liked her from infancy; and tell her I am not only glad but vain of the distinction she has attained in the eyes of another of at least equally good taste,—who, I hope, will find in the fruit all that the blossom promised. I am, dear friend, yours, affectionately,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXIV.

TO A FRIEND IN THE UNITED STATES, AMERICA.

Edinburgh, 22d June, 1834.

My dear Friend,

A letter from you, which has lingered long on its way, has at length reached me. Two, which I certainly sent, one by Liverpool, the other by one of your countrymen, must, I think, have reached you before now. But my present anxiety is about your dear nephew, of whom we have daily expected to hear for

some time, and for whose prolonged silence I am at the utmost loss to account.

* * * * * *

Now, after I have spoken so much of these worthies, who are truly originals, standing on high ground, it remains to speak of one original in a very different way, who interests me, and will interest you, more than any of them,—my own Margaret*, whom I have known from childhood, though not so well as her two sisters, who were a little older, and had lived more with me. Margaret is four-and-twenty; but I think of her as only fifteen, her innocence of heart and newness to the world having preserved the fresh simplicity of that age. She has a very good, though not highly-cultivated understanding, a fine natural disposition, and very warm affections. With talents and understanding, innocence and integrity, that render her daily more valuable and estimable, the qualities of her mind are unfolding like a flower in sunshine. You wish to know and hear of her appearance. She has a good figure, tall and well made, what one would call genteel-looking; eyes and mouth very good, with a fresh complexion, and a profusion of chestnut hair; without the air of fashion or of the world, but with a kind of simple elegance; modest and shy, and with an originality that speaks of mind. You would scarcely call her a fine woman; but she is very near that, and even in her looks daily improving. She has a taste in dress correct and simple like herself, but no passion for it; consistent

* Her daughter-in-law, Mrs. J. P. Grant, formerly Miss Margaret Steven.

elegance, of a quiet and chastened kind, about her house and furniture seems more her object. She is certainly a fine creature; and finer in my eyes for her unworldly habits of thinking and judging. Living so long in safe seclusion, the world has no dangerous charms for her. I think I need not add that I am fond of this new daughter; wanting, as much I did, something to love that had affection and principle, and had loved me much and early.

For some weeks past it appeared as if the wine of life was on the lees, and the period drew near that so few of us can meet without apprehension, whatever may be our experience of divine mercy and reliance on the highest proof of it. I am much better now, and thankful for being so: there are still some to whom I think I can be useful while I remain. I am anxious to hear something of Mrs. Horace Gray; where she is and how: my now failing memory represents my short intercourse with her, as if some bright vision from a better world had come, with two attendant cherubs, to look in upon me, and, vanishing, left a train of light behind. Do tell me of her. Your truly attached,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXV.

TO A FRIEND.

Edinburgh, 12th July, 1834.

My dear Mrs. ——,

If you knew how often and how anxiously I have thought of you and for you, you would make allowance for my long delay in writing to you, for which I have often reproached myself, the more as I do not remember forming so cordial an esteem for any one on so short an acquaintance. My interest in you, since you have entered on new engagements and duties, has been much increased by hearing with what cheerful patience you have conducted yourself, in a situation which has every thing that mutual worth and mutual affection can give for the heart, though worldly circumstances are inadequate to your ease of mind and comfort, when the demands of a fast-increasing family, with its hourly cares and solicitudes, call for such a constant exertion of body. The fervour of maternal love is wisely given to support us under cares and fatigues that would otherwise be insupportable. A person of acknowledged talents and highly intellectual powers and habits like Mr. —— might naturally expect to find a resource in literature; but, as Goldsmith truly says of a far higher theme, "the harvest is small, and the labourers many." Literature, which affords such delightful objects for the contemplation of a mind at ease, assumes a very different aspect to those who literally please to live. It is useless to ask why Mr. —— has

not recourse to a more permanent income from promotion in your Church, persecuted as it seems to be at present, where he might prosecute his other elegant studies with more tranquillity while assured of a certain income. The most diligent and successful labourers in the field of literature are merely supported, very rarely rendered independent, and never enriched that I know of, but in a single instance, and even in that the riches took themselves wings and flew away. Sir Walter Scott's inexhaustible mind poured forth such a copious stream of instructive entertainment to his fellow-creatures, that he stands alone and unrivalled.

You must at least think me unfeeling and indelicate to croak in this distressing strain; yet who would feel true and deep sympathy if I did not, who so long felt and feared all that is present and prospective with you? Children are God's heritage; and when we consider and cultivate them as such, we know that He is a rich provider, and, while he feeds young ravens, will not neglect the progeny of his true worshippers brought up to love and fear him. But far from trying to weaken your faith or cloud your prospects, I only wish you not to depend on the broken reed of literature, but to make a bold effort to improve your condition elsewhere. I am at a loss what to think about your going to America, as Mr. —— must be such an entire stranger to management of new lands; and you may possibly have expectations at home that might be frustrated by your leaving it. Going to a new country is making a sacrifice of much ease and comfort to the future interests of one's

children: but for what else do we live? I hope you may still find friends at home to promote your interests; but if it so happens that you find a removal of this nature necessary, I should be glad, by means of my transatlantic friends, to pave the way. It remains to tell you that my health since summer is better, thank God, than I could expect at this time of life. I have told you before what an acquisition I have made in a daughter-in-law, whom I have known and loved since childhood. My son sends his best regards to you and Mr. ——. Write soon, and show that you continue your regard for, dear Mrs. ——, yours, very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXVI.

TO MRS. IZETT, DUNKELD.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 14th July, 1834.

Many thanks for your letter, which really did me much good, carrying home to my heart so much of "the sober certainty of waking bliss," which you are now enjoying with your dear friend in a place so beautiful and so familiar to your early recollections, and in a region where every creature you meet regards you with the brightening eye of friendship. I am better in every respect than I have been for several years: I sleep sound and long, — indeed, taste more

of that balm of hurt minds than I did at any period of my recollection; for my mind seemed long alien to sleep, with a kind of morbid activity. Neither you nor I, with your constitutional delicacy, and my increasing load of years, can expect this bright gleam, given us both, to continue; yet we are warranted to use it gratefully, and taste it gladly, as few people have the blessing, at our age, of such youthful feelings. We have never permitted the clods of earth to cling too close to us in our progress hitherto; and they do not encumber us now, when we are about to shake them off entirely.

I must now speak of the Church in Ireland, for the state of which you have, no doubt, as well as myself, felt both sorrow and fear. I am apt to see the sunny side of things in general, and had strong hopes that the Divine Head of the Church would not forsake it: I do not mean that the Divine support and protection are more peculiarly reserved for the Establishment, but that the fences by which it excludes errors, and the firmness it gives to the community, make it of more consequence to the general welfare that it should be protected. A Mr. O'Sullivan, who, I am told, is the Chalmers of Ireland, was lately here with his family, and told me, what, indeed, I have heard from many others, of much improvement in zeal and diligence having taken place in the Irish Church for some time past. We all know that this is evidently the case in that of England, which never had more exemplary bishops, and possesses a daily increasing number of sound and earnest preachers. It is evident that there is a great

change in the public feeling since the last century; and zeal for the Establishment, as well as the dread of change, seems daily increasing. Another Ministry seems impending, and is perhaps necessary to ripen the growing distrust of the present. I must conclude with sending the family's united good wishes to you and your best friend. I need scarcely tell you how very truly I am, dear friend, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXVII.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Bellahouston, near Glasgow,
14th August, 1834.

My dear and constant Friend,

I admire much the habits of the people of Kamschatka, who are separated from their friends for half a year, or much more, by the climate. When they do meet, the visiter sits down, and never ceases talking till every incident and feeling since they parted has been recounted; after which the person visited begins a detail of the same kind. Now, I had prepared my narrative when I had a hope of meeting you in Edinburgh; and I supposed us, like those sentimental savages, narrating all the few joys and many sorrows that had occurred in the interval. We that have pens, and very busy ones, have anticipated much, but still much remains.

I shall check this overflowing of the heart to tell

you, after thanking you for a long, connected letter, full of clear, distinct intelligence, that I am at Bellahouston, the beautiful residence of my son's brother-in-law, two or three miles below Glasgow, on the south side of the Clyde. My having power to make out a land-journey of fifty miles in one day has surprised every one, and myself most of all. I usually see a great many strangers in Edinburgh at this time of year; but while I am here, the object of unbounded care and kindness, and have my son and his pretty wife with me, I escape people that come merely to look at me when I am no longer worth looking at. Think, too, of the leisure I looked for here, and find,—having a garden-chair, a fine library, and the owner of it, a most amiable person, making a study of all that can gratify me.

In answer to your question, I have read the highly-revered Bishop of Limerick's Life and Correspondence with Mr. Knox, and had much pleasure in tracing the footsteps of such a real saint. He seems to live in his letters: those from England brought back to memory many loved characters whom death has made sacred,—the Thorntons, and others who, like them, live to honour their Maker.

I shall now tell you of the acquisition I have made in my old kind friend, Mrs. Henry Erskine, who has come to live near me, in Edinburgh, which will be a blessing to me while I *do* live. The divided paths of life have separated us long: you know she was the sister of her fellow-mind, Sir Thomas Munro. But I cannot cram so much worth, genius, and true generosity into a corner. Being much

fatigued, I can only add, that I am truly, tenderly, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXVIII.

TO MRS. SMITH, IBROX HILL.*

Bellahouston, 15th August.

My dear Friend,

I was disappointed to hear from my son, who called for you yesterday, that you were still confined to your room. I hope the radiance of this day does not shine for you in vain, but that you will be able to go a little out to enjoy it. I have been out for some hours; but though I had not, my constant wish to communicate my overflowing delight in Mrs. Hannah More's Life, and my high enjoyment of all the good company to which she has introduced me, would oppress me unless I gave vent to it. After reading most of the first volume, I readily agree with you that she led a happier life than any one I ever heard of. All that elegant luxury afforded she enjoyed, without the care, anxiety, and expense that their owners find unavoidable: she luxuriated in the highest intellectual pleasures, and drank them from the purest sources, — living as she did with the wise, the worthy, the witty, and the elegant, the learned, the pious, philosophers and saints. Of the praise that flows from the heart, no queen or princess ever re-

* Mrs. Smith was then on a visit to her daughter at Ibrox Hill, in the immediate vicinity of Bellahouston, and daily intercourse was kept up between the two friends while Mrs. Grant remained in that neighbourhood.

ceived more to the last day of her protracted though not painless existence, during which she survived so many friends, who were the light and ornament of the age in which she lived. You and I shall here meet with lessons for our fast-approaching hour from those who, after long teaching us how to live, gave us the still more impressive lesson how to die. May these lessons be blest to us, to whom so much light and knowledge are given.

I am tempted to invent a new epithet for one of Mrs. More's most active and efficient talents. I would call it *hallowed wit*, sanctified by the use she made of it: the shafts which she launched against vice and folly would neither have flown so far, nor pierced so deep, without being thus feathered. To be sure, when the sons of light were gathered together, Horace Walpole came also among them; her indulgence for him was merely a spot upon a vestal's robe. I regard this wonderful woman — blest in life, and doubly blest in death — with a mixture of awe and admiration. In one instance only I could assert a competition, — namely, in the dread of being thought much better than I am, which has haunted me all my life.

I fear the enclosed letter from America will disturb and puzzle more than entertain you: I send it as a kind of literary curiosity, — the renewal of an intercourse suspended for sixty-five years. But your servant waits. Adieu!

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXIX.

TO MRS. SMITH, IBROX HILL.

My dear Friend, Bellahouston, 28th August.

I do not remember being so agreeably surprised by a note as by yours yesterday. I have been enabled to keep for many years so free of the faculty, that when a doctor is called to one of our years I take an alarm. It was kind in you to tell me how much better you were.

I was sorry and ashamed to find the fourth volume of Hannah More's Life here. I had hastily finished, and I thought sent it down to you three or four days since. This omission is one of the yellow leaves that show the failure of a faculty I once possessed in no common degree. I think of your ability to walk as an advantage you possess over me; but to-day, when, encircling the hill, I sat in my garden chair reading in the open air, more persons than I regretted that you were not with me, enjoying a day so sweet and spring-like. May our decay prove as calm and serene, if it be the divine will. How much have we to be thankful for in thus meeting each other, and being enabled to enjoy, as it were together, the precious remains of that incomparable woman, who was not only the faithful and highly successful servant of her Lord, while here diligently busied with her labours of love; but, living in her works while Christianity and the English language endure, will be a source of pure delight and improvement to succeeding gene-

rations. I felt an odd sensation, as if it brought me near her whose memory is so precious, from the little circumstance of finding that my late friend Mr. Hatsell had left a mourning-ring to Hannah More, as he did to me. This is a hastily-written note; but I well know every thing that comes from me will be welcome. Adieu, for the present.

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXX.

TO A FRIEND IN THE UNITED STATES, AMERICA.

Bellahouston, near Glasgow,
20th October, 1834.

My dear Friend,

I hope you have before now received a letter from my daughter-in-law, acknowledging a present (a much valued one) you were kind enough to send her, which I consider as a token of the love, strong as death, which you have so long cherished for one who I may say was deserving of it, and loved you very much.* I am now, in wintry and unpromising weather, and under the pressure of a serious cold, preparing to leave this place, where I have passed three of the most agreeable months which have fallen to my lot for many clouded, and some stormy years. This very desirable residence lies on a considerable eminence, within three miles of Glasgow, on which we look down, and have indeed a most extensive and varied view on every side: the ornamental planting,

*. Mrs. Grant's late daughter, Mary.

with as much of a natural appearance as possible, is surrounded with an extensive and fertile country. It belongs to Mr. Steven, my son's brother-in-law, whom I regard with a kind of maternal tenderness, having known him from childhood as one of the most candid and upright, as well as the most gentle and amiable of human beings. He and I have ever been on the most pleasant and companionable footing; and he, as well as his two excellent sisters, who vie with him in every possible attention to my comfort and gratification, seem much pleased with the occurrences that have lengthened my visit. It was thought somewhat hazardous, on account of my many infirmities, to bring me so far; but this truly rural life has agreed very well with me, being much in the open air and in motion,—they having an excellent garden-chair, in which I was drawn about the grounds every day till now that all begins to look wintry. We were in full preparation for returning to Edinburgh above three weeks since, when my son had occasion to go to London; he took his wife with him, and I agreed to stay here till their return, which is expected to-morrow.

You are no stranger to the long and true friendship which has subsisted between Mrs. Smith of Jordanhill and myself. We were born in the same year, and our acquaintance, which soon ripened into friendship, continued from that day to this without interruption or abatement. Her only daughter, a person of pleasing manners and an elegant mind, was married to a worthy and wealthy man, who appreciated her value, and felt grateful for her patien

attention during a long lingering illness. They were childless, and all his relations were rich; so he left her a jointure unheard of among private gentlemen here. . . . . Her mother, whose health has been for some time precarious, was on a visit to a favourite son, who is most happily married: whenever she heard of my arrival she came over to her daughter's dwelling, which is embellished with much taste, and stands at the foot of this eminence. There she remained two months, either coming or writing to me almost every day: our intercourse, though so near the narrow house appointed for all living, has been very pleasant, and I hope not unprofitable. Some weeks ago she felt weaker, and retired to her own house in town. It was not expected that she would ever write again; but I have got a most characteristic note this morning, which I am going, in the fulness of my heart, to enclose to you; pray take great care of it, for it may prove to be the last relic of a dying saint: send it back to me if I live another year. I hope you will value the enclosure as a proof of true good will; and believe me always, very truly, yours.

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXI.

TO DR. FRANCIS BOOTT, LONDON.

Edinburgh, 28th November, 1834.

My dear Friend,

I cannot express to you the grief with which I received the sad intelligence of Mrs. Horace Gray's death, conveyed in your letter. That fine creature, whom I regarded with a mixture of love and admiration almost unnatural at my time of life, I could almost wish I had never seen, when I find that her fair light is to us so soon extinguished, and under such circumstances.* I knew too well that lovely and fragile form was not made for duration: she herself looked on this world as a short passage to a better; yet I hoped that the benefit and the pleasure that her spotless mind and sweet manners diffused among all that loved virtue, and admired it in its fairest form, might be a little longer lent to us, before she was summoned to join the angelic beings whom she most resembled when here. I felt inclined to say,—

> "Absent thee from felicity awhile,
> And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain."

In a long letter, which I fear did not reach her, I gave vent to all this fond solicitude in very minute directions for the management of herself previous to the expected crisis. How vain to regret that she

* Mrs. Gray died in childbed, on the voyage from England to Boston, America, which she had left some years before, accompanied by her husband and children, in the hope that her health might be re-established by travelling in Europe.

did not see this last proof of an attachment so singular that I might call it a religious one; for I think I admired her for something that was not of the earth earthly, but a bright effulgence round her, as it were, of a purified spirit. Full as my heart is of the charms and heavenly graces that so suddenly won my affections, I could not pour it out in this manner but where I was sure to find the echo of my own feelings. This is to you and Mrs. *B.* a bitter medicine, yet I hope it will be an effectual one. Compare, for an instant, what would be your own feelings in such a case as this. At the time when you were both grieving to see your dear boy safe anchored on the celestial shore, you and his mother mourned *together*, and that was a mournful consolation; but in such a case as this you would find it the grief that knows not consolation's name. Be very thankful for what remains.

My son and his wife are well, and I am the better of being tenderly cared for and of three months in the country. This letter should rather have been addressed to Mrs. Boott, to whom and her flock commend me tenderly, with a kiss to Isabella. Adieu, kindly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXII.

TO A FRIEND IN THE UNITED STATES, AMERICA.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 18th March, 1835.

I have been much too long in acknowledging the favour of your kind letter, and the accompanying number of your American Review, which always entertains me. You could not suppose it possible that at my age, and after being visited with so deep a portion of personal sorrows, I should allow my mind to be much disturbed with politics; yet so it was, not only because some highly-esteemed individuals were deeply concerned in the late contest, but that all the fabric, which the wisdom, virtue, and piety of our and your ancestors had been for a thousand years building up, seemed tottering to its foundation. My hopes were never extinguished, though my indignation was much more excited than it ought to be when a more permanent state of existence is near in prospect: but it was really difficult for feeble humanity to restrain its indignant feelings, when our moral and religious populace, of which we were once so proud, showed such depravity.* I know you will have some indulgence for my patriotic feelings, however useless and ill-timed they may be. The contest has been severe, yet the throne and the altar, under the divine protection, still stand firm,

* Alluding to the disgraceful riots that had taken place in Scotland at certain elections for Parliament.

while the rage and disappointment of the demagogues waste themselves in unavailing abuse.

I have perhaps wearied you with the expression of feelings too strong to be repressed, yet one additional favour I will ask of you, taking for granted that you have entered into my feelings. Read, what you will easily get among intelligent friends, the last number of the Quarterly Review, now carried on by the highly-talented John Lockhart, with the frequent assistance of Southey and others. You will there find the last breathing of a dying sage*, redolent with the light of truth, and rich in that prophetic spirit which is often given to the wise and good as they are about to enter through the gates of immortality. Pray attend to his noble justification of the ways of Providence, when his friend indicates his regret that he, and such as he, had so sparing a portion of this world's goods. How just, how acquiescent, and how true it is that they to whom nature has given so many high and pure sources of enjoyment, ought not to repine while the high enjoyment of intellectual pleasures, and the delight which the fair face of nature affords to the mind of genius, in all its native purity, are so peculiarly their own. Coleridge was, like Moses, forbid to enter into the promised land; but, from a Pisgah of his own, he saw it in clear vision.

I had a most affecting letter lately from Mr. Horace Gray; but he had not at that time received one I wrote to him on hearing of his irreparable loss.

* "The Remains of S. T. Coleridge."— Reviewed in the Quarterly Review for February, 1835.

I hope he has got that letter, as it contained a proof of the effect produced on my mind by what I am tempted to call the enchantment of his departed wife's character: any thing so pure, so bright, so heavenly, I have rarely met with; and she seemed to have such a kindly feeling towards me, that there was no resisting its influence. "How shall a man love God, whom he hath not seen, if he love not his brother, whom he hath seen?" How deeply, how tenderly, does this speak to the heart. If we cannot ascend to the fountain of perfection in this cloudy state of existence, we at least show love in delighting in those in whom the Divine image is most apparent and most unsullied. I am, as I have long been, dear friend, gratefully and cordially yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXIII.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 13th April, 1835.

My dear Friend,

Your last letter contained so uncomfortable an account of your health, and that of dear Walter, that I begin to grow impatient to hear better accounts of you both.

There is something very solemn in finding one's self on this side of eighty*, a period that so few attain, and

* Mrs. Grant had completed her eightieth year on 21st Feb. 1835.

which it appears to me almost miraculous that I should have attained, considering my long warfare with calamity. Deaths come so fast upon me, that I have no leisure to wipe my eyes before there comes another demand upon my sympathy. Sympathy I call it, as it is not for the departed, but for the survivors that I mourn. It is little more than a fortnight since one of the most amiable and useful persons I have ever known, with the exception of her incomparable mother, was called to her reward by a sudden and, I think, easy death. This was Miss Mackenzie, daughter of Henry Mackenzie, the "Man of Feeling." In her youth she had beauty of a peculiarly elegant kind, perfect good breeding, fine taste, and gentle manners. Her mother, whose friend, companion, and chief comfort she was, outlived her but a week.

I grieve to tell you that my daughter-in-law, my dear Margaret, has been for some time in a delicate state of health, that it would be distressing for me to witness though she had been less dear and less deserving; she looks thin and pale, and seems fading like a flower. I do not apologise for asking your sympathy in this great affliction. Alas! I cannot see to the end of it. I am, dear friend, your affectionate and attached

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXIV.

TO MRS. HOOK.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, 27th May, 1835.

In alluding to the present state of public affairs, I fear that I do a very wrong thing, very unsuitable to my time of life, and to that meek submission with which it is our duty to await the issues of Providence; but fate (I hope not an evil one) constrains me. I make up in frankness to you, and one other person, for my reserve *here;* for the most ordinary discourse is not free from the poison of party spirit. I feel myself like the weak yet good old man Eli, when he went out in his feeble and infirm old age, and sat at the gate of the city to watch for tidings of the Ark of the Lord while threatened by the Philistines. I have the same eager solicitude about the Ark of our safety,—the same terror lest as a punishment for our many sins we may be forsaken; yet I feel more inclined, like Milton, "to bate no jot of heart or hope." . . . . . .

I have just had visitors, very pleasant ones, the next thing to seeing yourself, Lady Townshend Farquhar, and her husband Mr. Thomas Hamilton;—she looking all good humour, like a person willing to please and be pleased; while Mr. Hamilton's manliness and dignity, and the soul that animates his countenance, at once arrest attention and command admiration. As they entered the room another very interesting couple left it,—Mr. and Mrs. Walker.

Mr. W. is a person of large fortune, and has lately bought an extensive Highland estate. He is, as the sailors say, a regular-built Conservative, and has just returned from the Inverness-shire election, where he voted against our friend Mr. Grant, of Glenmoriston, who appeared as the representative of Charles Grant.* I should have been very sorry for his own sake that Glenmoriston had succeeded. He is beloved and esteemed by every one, and justly accounted the very *beau ideal* of a respectable country gentleman; judicious in his conduct, and amiable in his social and domestic relations,—living in a region of beauty, in the midst of devoted adherents, and surrounded by a large family, to whom he and their mother are setting the best possible example: and he now wishes, from a kind of romantic friendship for Charles Grant, to leave all this for the struggles of politics. Charles Grant I really loved as a person of congenial feelings, and of a pure, elegant mind, deeply imbued with piety and wisdom. As Lord Glenelg, following O'Connell's train, I cannot recognise my old friend.

Alas! for Mrs. Hemans,—the pure and ever fertile genius that is now extinguished in death, relieved I might well say from the evils of a life where her feelings were too often wounded, and her heart oppressed with care. How it grieved me to see her fine genius degraded, and her spirits worn out with the drudgery of furnishing poems to newspapers, and all the periodicals. The last strains of that angelic harp appeared in Blackwood's Magazine; they must

* Formerly Member for Inverness-shire.

have been composed a few days before her death. The first part is called "Despondency;" the last, "Aspiration."

This letter will probably be conveyed to you by Mr. Henry Stuart*, a favourite kinsman of mine, from Argyleshire, who thinks of visiting Leamington to consult your eminent physician. Should his health permit him to see you, you will be much pleased with his original powerful conversation. A strong, clear, and cultivated understanding, a very warm heart, and a high honourable spirit, have made him from childhood very dear to me. Believe me gratefully, kindly, always yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXV.

TO MRS. IZETT.

Elie, Fifeshire,
14th August, 1835.

My dear Friend,

I am not quite aware who wrote last: my memory, which has long been faithful and comprehensive beyond most others, begins to fail me about daily occurrences. But I think it scarcely possible that I did not tell you of the great enjoyment I had in the beauty and soft tranquillity of that enchanting place Aberdour, where, in a most desirable abode near

* Since deceased. He was the youngest son of the late D. Stuart, Esq. of Ballachelish.

the sea-side, we lately spent some weeks, surrounded with all the vernal delights that Milton speaks of. I could not have believed, without seeing them, that so many lofty trees, and so many of the tenderest plants, that we consider as requiring shelter and no common care, could thrive even to luxuriance so near the sea, which, however, appears there merely in the form of a beautiful bay, with sheltering rocks on each side. I will not tire you with a description of the garden, though worthy of Alcinous, nor of the shrubbery in which I took so much pleasure, sitting a part of every forenoon in it; but I must have you to admire the arbutus, which abounds there, growing very tall, and loaded with clustering berries. The pretty house which we occupied, and the charming grounds which surround it, belong now to Miss Henderson, the late Baronet's sister. Our friends have taken it till September.

Now you must come down with me to Elie, where my son had engaged for us the house of the Hon. Mrs. Bruce, a sister of Lord Rollo, whose husband inherited an estate in the neighbourhood, which I fear he contrived to spend before he died. This large, convenient house, standing close to the sea-side, is as much to my taste as if I had built it myself; there is nothing of paltry pretension about it, but much substantial comfort. The only ornaments are very respectable ones in the form of a great number of family pictures,—Bruces not a few: Sir William Bruce, of Kinross, at this moment seems to regard me with complacence. Of the brave and the fair there are others of an earlier date, as their plated armour,

and the antique dress of the belles, bear witness. I assure you I look up to those "shades of the dead" with no small respect. We have a very fine sea-view here, ornamented at the opposite side by Tantallon Castle and the Bass. My son tells me he never saw me before in a place where I did not know any one. He and his wife are uneasy lest time should hang heavy on me, as if I did not knit, and read, and write, besides thinking: they are so possessed with this notion that they have sent for a lady and her brother for my sole amusement. They find a great enjoyment themselves in riding and walking about, the neighbourhood being full of seats of old renown, with fine ornamented grounds and gardens.

Though I have now told you every thing that I have seen, I would not advise you to emulate me, not being, I fear, equal to any such great exertion: you are merely to say how you are, where you are, and what you are reading. I have here two volumes of Coleridge's Table-talk: I am glad to find that his nephew is also his son-in-law. Jane Coleridge was in every respect so fine a creature, that other people as well as myself were quite at a loss to think of a fitting marriage for her: she was brought up in the kindly dwelling of Southey, where nothing but good was to be learned. I shall long to know where you are, for I am indeed, dear friend, affectionately yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXVI.

TO A FRIEND IN THE UNITED STATES, AMERICA.

Elie, Fifeshire, 10th Sept., 1835.

My dear Friend,

I have now two very kind letters from you to acknowledge. I had heard of your severe indisposition, and dreaded what I was next to hear: I will not say how much I was relieved by seeing your handwriting again.

When I wrote to you before, I referred you to the Quarterly Review for some criticisms that I should have been glad to have made myself: I again refer you to the last one, where you will see a very judicious and well-written critique on Miss Fanny Kemble's Journal in America, which I am sure you will find interesting. In old surly Gifford's time, I suppose its bitterness made this Review very unpalatable to Americans. But he now sleeps with his fathers, and more benignant stars have the ascendant over it, — Southey, always good and amiable, and Lockhart, whose severe criticisms in early days are much tempered by his riper judgment, and the sweet influence of his father-in-law, Sir Walter, in whom all the elements were so kindly mixed, that nothing but the gall seemed wanting.

By-the-by, I have seen lately an account of a visit which Washington Irving paid, many years ago, to Sir Walter Scott, which amused me much, and was very characteristic. You see the man in all his delightful simplicity of manners and sweetness of temper: he

does not endeavour to dazzle or surprise his far-travelled guest with brilliant sallies or with wonderful anecdotes; he receives him in his ordinary dress, recognising him as a kindred mind, with whom he had been long familiar, and who, he well knew, had travelled over his comprehensive mind too well to feel himself a stranger. How pleasant to witness the quiet, familiar intercourse of two persons so intuitively intimate, and so utterly free from all desire of exhibition. . . . . .

I would escape from speaking of myself, by asking you to tell me of your dear nephew, who, I hope, is by this time arrived in Persia. I gave him a few lines to Mrs. M'Neill, with whom I always exchanged an annual letter, she being the dear friend of my beloved Moore: she was married seven years ago to Mr. John M'Neill *, a younger son of Colonsay, one of our island lairds, who was attached to our embassy. They were both at Colonsay in summer, when he, who is a great favourite at the Persian court, was hastily summoned to act as secretary to the ambassador we have sent out, who, it is thought, will return directly to England, and leave Mr. M'Neill as chargé d'affaires in his place. I think in his travels your nephew will scarcely meet with such a person, so noble in external appearance, and of so accomplished a mind. Your friend who brought your letter did not arrive till we left town. Any one who brings a line from America is considered as the bearer of an olive-leaf, and treated accordingly. A young countryman of yours, of the name of Preston, came

* Sir John M'Neill, G.C.B., late British Minister at the Court of Persia.

to Edinburgh several years ago: he was of a striking appearance, with an intensely animated countenance, a refined taste, and most cultivated mind — really high talent. I thought he would be soon and much distinguished, but could never hear of him till very lately; and now I find he is a Member of Congress. He will distinguish himself. Farewell, dear friend.

ANNE GRANT.

"

LETTER CCCLXXVII.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 13th December, 1835.

My dear Friend,

We returned here from Fifeshire early in November, and soon after our arrival my dear Margaret appeared affected with a cold, not in the least alarming, but on the fourth day she became very ill; indeed the physician first dreaded inflammation, but the pain has abated. She is patience itself: her eldest sister has remained in the house watching over her ever since. I have, I fear, omitted to tell you what pure-minded, benevolent, and unsophisticated creatures my new connexions are, and how studious they are of all that relates to my comfort.

I have been thinking much lately of poor Mrs. Hemans, that sweet singer of Britain, now for ever silent. In the "Contemplation of a Girl's School at Evening Prayer," she clothes many fine and hallowed images in the rich melody of her own peculiar lan-

guage, and is led on by her own perception and sad experience, to anticipate that state of trial and suffering to which the better and the gentler sex seem predestined; looking forward, from the serene purity of their evening devotions, to the pains and cares that are the sad inheritance of even the most virtuous and excellent females, in the performance of many painful duties, and the disappointment of many tender and sanguine hopes. There is one line, dictated no doubt by her personal and peculiar feelings, which opens a volume of those evils too deep, too delicate, for exposure, for which earth affords no remedy:—

"'Tis to make idols, and to find them clay."

There is not a line in the English language more full of deep and sad meaning. I was very desirous that Mrs. Hemans should be my guest when she visited Edinburgh some years ago; but she had engagements that would not admit of the indulgence of this wish: I could do very little for her, but that little she over-appreciated. Her real and well-judging patroness was that admirable and excellent person, Lady Cunliffe, whose sudden death lately deprived her friends of a model of all that was good and amiable, being always ready to extend that indulgence to others that she did not need herself. She wrote to me that Mrs. Hemans spoke warmly of what she called my maternal feelings and conduct to her. How much I love and reverence Sir Robert Peel for his generous kindness to her son, who certainly is one of the finest boys I ever saw, full of taste and good feeling, with a most prepossessing appearance.

You have probably heard that Mrs. M. is married again. I am a true Scotchwoman, and, consequently, averse to second marriages of widows; though I own this to be very illiberal, having known of worthy and exemplary persons — Lady Rachel Russell for instance — contracting such.

I read this day a short but most affecting poem of Wordsworth's, occasioned by poor Hogg's death, in which he alludes to many fallen stars, — Sir Walter, that wonderful Coleridge, and other bright names, which can never be extinguished, though now departed from our sight. I was just in a mood to feel all those reminiscences to the utmost, for I had been engaged in reading the agonising details which the unequalled Duchess of Angoulême has given of the sufferings of the Royal Family in the Temple, republished, with most interesting notes, by Mr. Croker.

Many things would rush on your recollection when you heard of the Marchioness of Salisbury's awful exit.* How it carried me back to your beautiful home at Hertingfordbury, and how it diminished worldly splendour in my eyes! I must take leave of you, while matter crowds upon me; for the day is expiring, and I must not venture to write by candlelight. Affectionately yours,

ANNE GRANT.

* Lady Salisbury perished in the fire which destroyed Hatfield House, the residence of the Marquis of Salisbury, in Hertfordshire.

LETTER CCCLXXVIII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

My dear Friend, Edinburgh, New-Year's Day, 1836.

Once more I address you on the beginning of another year of lengthened trial and extended mercy to us both. Thoroughly as I am convinced that you have long been in a state of calm and confiding preparation for a higher existence, I am always tempted to say, "Live a little longer," from a scarcely-formed wish that you should be the survivor for the few months, were those only allowed, that you are my junior. But all such wishes are not only vain and idle, but perhaps sinful.

We have much to be thankful for in the unimpaired use of our faculties; and though my infirmities forbid the advantage, my health is uncommonly good for my age. You have more to leave behind than I have, and your ties to earth are daily increasing; but I trust my precious things are all treasured up waiting my arrival. Even if the task should be appointed for me, as happened to many of the excellent of the earth, to linger here after the activity of mind and warm interest in life have forsaken us, still, when we cease to enjoy we shall also cease to suffer: the calm slumber of the now restless imagination, that precedes the extinction of life, is not a thing to be dreaded by ourselves or deplored by others. . . . . .

Sir Robert Liston's state is a very singular one; the extinction of his mental faculties was very sudden,

without the least premonition: the beginning of this change showed itself in continually speaking foreign languages with little or no meaning. He is ninety-two; and never was a more forlorn or helpless old man. There is, however, a good old lady, the childless widow of a brother, whom Lady Liston was very kind to: she seemed to have retired from the world entirely, and seldom came out of her own room; but when Sir Robert was thus changed, all her slumbering energies seemed suddenly awakened, and she now manages the family with great propriety, and has over him a most beneficial influence. My dear Margaret's recovery goes on. With best respects to Mrs. Maccall, I bid you cordially farewell.

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXIX.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 1st March, 1836.

My dear Friend,

I have received your last affectionate letter, which bears too clear evidence of the heart-ache under which it was written. My former letter to you was intended to be consolatory, by calculating, in a manner, the rich reversion remaining to you; but it is only —

> "When time on memory's pensive urn
> A softer shade of sorrow throws,"

that we find such consolations available.

I am glad to find that one of the sons of your late brother, Sir Thomas, belongs to the Church. One must have auspicious views of such a preference in a person who has all the world before him where to choose, and must consider it at least a sober-minded, if not a heavenly-minded aspiration that leads to such a choice. I have no doubt that now, when the love of so many begins to wax cold, and blows are so often aimed to shake the foundation of that venerable edifice, vulgar minds may think such a connexion less safe and less desirable than formerly. I think very differently. It appears to me that what is considered by many as the peril of the Church acts upon its ministers, only as a wholesome alarm to awake the watchmen on her walls to a more awful sense of their duty. I certainly ought, at this time of life, to keep my mind in a calmer and more resigned state, not disturbing my own peace of mind when I cannot be of the least service to any one. But when I muse, the fire burneth. I cannot imitate the quietude of the good Bishop, who, when the poor are spoken of, "admits, and leaves them Providence's care."

We have not for some time met on our neutral ground — literature. I am enjoying Southey's Life of Cowper. I like both the author and the subject, and am comforted to find the gleams of enjoyment which, now and then, shed such light on the sad path of the melancholy poet. You have not told me what you think of Hannah More's Life. I know no biography from which I derive so much pleasure; not merely in seeing her pursue so calmly and steadily her upward path, but from her intercourse with life

bringing us acquainted with so many excellent characters, who shed lustre on the higher ranks, and seem always looking up to this model of cheerful enjoyment as their guide and teacher. It puts one in good humour with the world to meet with so many who have preserved their purity of mind and simplicity of manners amid all its allurements. Hannah's little "Tracts for the Poor" are invaluable, and should be reprinted.

I believe you do not know all the privations under which I labour. But that you may think of me as I am, and be more thankful for your own superior advantages, I will tell you some of them, but not querulously, for I am well aware of all my remaining blessings. In the first place, the lameness under which I have suffered for many years has been so increased by later accidents that I cannot now walk, even with the help of crutches, without the risk of a fall, which might prove fatal; but then I have the neatest wheeled chair imaginable, and the most devoted, careful, and affectionate son and daughter-in-law. In the next place, I do not hear general conversation, though I still make out pretty well what is said by one or two who sit near me. Now that I have made you sorry, I will administer a little consolation. I have told you that I consider my treasures laid up in heaven. I have a tremulous hope, too often clouded with fear, that the time is drawing near when I may be permitted to rejoin them; but this by no means amounts to assurance: I fear that it is not so easily granted as people say. I shall comfort you, also, by telling you what yet remains to me besides the unwearied,

tender attention of my own dear children, — MY EYES: witness this epistle. I write less or more every day, being cheered by keeping up my connexion with those whose love has been a cordial to me through many sorrows. I cannot say of my unworn and unwearied eyes, like Eloisa, —

> "No other task these faded eyes pursue;
> To write and weep is all they now can do."

The fountain of tears seems dried up with me, yet sometimes it gushes forth when something solemn and tender touches "the sacred source of sympathetic woe:" for instance, Cowper's sonnet to Mrs. Unwin,— "Mary, I want a harp with other strings." Fifty times and more have I read it, but never with dry eyes. This I do not account among the infirmities of age: the worst infirmity is to feel only for self. My health is such as is very rarely vouchsafed to persons who have struggled through the vale of life for so long a period, and my spirits are pretty equal. All my former pupils who live within reach of me come often, with filial affection, to visit me; and certain sages, returned from abroad, now and then come to see me as a sybil, or curious antiquity. Farewell! Tell me in your next whether you have read the books I mention. All here join in the kindest regards to you, with your true and affectionate

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXX.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 3d May, 1836.

My dear Friend,

I should not have been so long without acknowledging a letter of yours, announcing two such desirable events as the birth of your grandson, and the proposed marriage, with every auspicious prospect, of your beloved niece, Miss Farquhar. Poor Constance cries in her first agony, when told of the marriage betwixt Lewis and Blanche, to which her son's rights were sacrificed, — "False blood to false blood joined!" But in this instance, you, on the contrary, may say, "True blood to true blood joined!" for certainly never was a lineage of more upright and honourable purity, on either side, than that which the proposed marriage is likely to unite. We hear much of Colonel Grey* from various quarters, more particularly from some of our young Highland friends, who are officers in his regiment, and speak of his high qualities as a commander, and engaging manners as a gentleman, in the best sense of that comprehensive epithet.

I have at length read La Martine's Travels in Palestine with much pleasure. Being, you know, a great Anti-Gallican, I was not quite willing to be pleased; but all my prejudices melted away before the sunshine of his joyous feelings. Sometimes, indeed, I was startled at the manner in which he eulo-

* The Hon. Colonel Charles Grey, son of Earl Grey, married in 1836 to Caroline Farquhar, daughter of Sir Thomas Farquhar, Bart.

gises certain Pachas and Emirs, whom you are called to admire for their great abilities and their graceful manners, and who, you are told afterwards with the utmost coolness, committed the most unnatural murders,—killing their brothers and all kindred that stood in their way. There is one class of people whom he describes that appeared to me very interesting, I mean the rural or agricultural monks on Mount Lebanon, whose peaceful and useful lives are divided between the labours of the field and the duties of religion. I think he does not often speak about his wife. I admire the account she gives of her own visit to Jerusalem, and think her style is less French and more masculine and vigorous than his own. I have taken a great fancy to Madame. La Martine has rather too many rainbows, which it becomes not me to blame, as I am myself much inclined to see the bright side of objects.

I do not like to speak or think of public matters now; yet one thing gave me pleasure,—the great collection made for the persecuted Irish clergy. I trust that He, whose power and will it is to bring good out of evil, will sanctify their afflictions, and impress upon their minds a deeper sense both of the high duties incumbent upon them, and of the mercy that thus visits them in their affliction, and, while the hearts of the great and powerful are hardened against them, sends such refreshing showers of bounty from strangers. I would have told you, with some triumph, of the progress that Protestantism is making in France, but am barely able to add that I am, with long-tried true affection, your sincere friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXXI.

TO MISS ANNE DUNBAR.

Seacliff House, near North Berwick,
10th July, 1836.

My dear Bar,

I have just received your affectionate letter, and cannot feel easy till I answer it. Although the cares of life are in a manner past, the languor and chill so common to old age have not yet seized on me. I feel a sort of consolation in cherishing the memory of the departed; and in your case more particularly so many of those whom I loved and lost, but trust soon to recover, are blended with yourself, and with the recollections of Laggan, which are fresh as if only a short time had divided me from it.

Alas! I know you do not mean to flatter me in comparing me with Hannah More; but the comparison makes me feel more deeply my own great inferiority. She was altogether a blessed woman: that powerful masculine intellect of hers, which appeared to be sanctified to the noblest purposes, did more good than that of any individual we have heard of in our times. Her writings were an unspeakable benefit to the poor: they appeared at a critical time, when the lower classes were infected with French principles, and produced a salutary change, like the healing branch thrown into the infected waters. It is pleasant to think with what reverence and esteem she was considered by the great and the gay, and how justly she was appreciated by the good.

You would wish now to hear something of myself. You know that I was lame for several years, though not so entirely so as I have been of late; but it would be presumption to complain while I enjoy such perfect health, and a blessing which has followed me through a life of many sorrows,—that of kind, excellent, and most exemplary friends, who are themselves all that I wish and hope to be before I am called from this world. I am sure you must have heard me speak of Mrs. Smith of Jordanhill. We were children of the same year: we met, after my return from America, when we were both fifteen years old, and formed a very warm friendship, which neither marriage, distance of place, nor any other circumstance has changed or affected. The excellent and very superior person to whom she was married, adopted all her feelings, and was ever to me an affectionate friend. Now, when we are both, as it were, hovering on the verge of time, our long attachment seems to have become a part of ourselves; we regularly write to each other every fortnight. O! that I had the same faith, and were as well fitted for the approaching change, as she is; but it is in the same merciful Saviour that we both place our whole trust, though mine seems always tremulous. . . . . Through what a fiery trial did our poor friend Miss Dunbar of Boath pass before she attained the rest appointed for the weary. Her spirits were really astonishing: a winter journey to Edinburgh, in her state of health, was a fearful undertaking.

My daughter-in-law pleases every one who knows her very much; she had a severe attack of illness,

but, I am thankful to say, is now recovering fast. Her brother, Mr. Steven, having let his own place in the west country, lived with his two sisters in Edinburgh last winter, and has taken this beautiful residence for the summer: it is near Tantallon Castle, and opposite to the Bass. Farewell, but not a final farewell, my dear Bar: as long as I think that it will be a satisfaction to your warm affectionate heart, you shall hear from me. Pray for me; and believe me to be, faithfully, yours,"

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXXII.

TO MRS. IZETT.

10. Coates Crescent,
28th September, 1836.

My dear Friend,

If you had not been on all occasions most willing to share your good things with me, I should imagine you had been consoled, in your late seclusion, with some beneficent resolution to attend to the widow and the fatherless with double care, on your recovery. Many thanks for your fruit and other good things: whatever pleasure I have in receiving those tokens of good will is much augmented by the consciousness of the pleasure you have in giving them. It was very kind in you to recover so soon and so completely, for my sake and that of others. You are in a perpetual state of preparation, no doubt; and to you the appointed hour, that opens the gates of

glory to the freed spirit, must be always welcome: but I have a shrinking dread of being the survivor.

I need not ask, for I am sure you had the pleasure — and a great pleasure it is — of reading Hannah More's Life and Letters: I read them in a cursory way when I was in the west country two years since; but I might say, as the young prophet did to Elisha, "Alas, master, for it was borrowed." I am reading the book now from my inexhaustible store the Signet Library, and have much more enjoyment in reading it over again at perfect leisure, and getting acquainted with her various friends, more especially Sir William Pepys, who appears to have lived surrounded with all the best blessings of this life, and looking forward with assured hope to inherit the promise of the life to come. I think that we ought to be very thankful, when the veil that covers the sanctity of private life is thus removed by death, that by tracing the correspondence of the excellent of the earth with each other, we find fresh materials to enlarge our charity, strengthen our faith, and confirm our hope. In general, we are not apt to give credit to our superiors in rank for the pious and most exemplary lives that many of them lead, to which the letters addressed to Hannah More from noble and royal personages bear ample testimony. Certainly, persons born to high station, and exposed in early youth to many temptations, often give too much occasion for moral censure; and of that we daily hear a great deal. Regular conduct and solid worth, among those that should be our examples, is well known only to the circle of their neighbours and

dependants; and their unspotted lives, their piety and beneficence, break out upon us like new and shining lights. Now, it is evident that, beside the pure light diffused from the throne, there were, in the days of George the Third, many in the higher ranks of life who lived in this world as heirs of immortality. Mrs. Boscawen is one of those whose letters and whose character I greatly admire. It is something remarkable of those highly-talented women Mrs. More and Mrs. Carter, who lived to consecrate those talents to be a blessing and a benefit to their fellow-creatures, that both should, during their whole lives, have been such sufferers from the most wretched health, —that neither of them ever was for a fortnight without pain, yet both of them far exceeded the usual period of human life. Those lamps of intellectual light that illuminate these frail tabernacles of mortality seem to have been in them a living flame. Farewell: I need hardly say, forget me not.

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXXIII.

TO MRS. SMITH.

9. Manor Place, Edinburgh,
7th November, 1836.

My dear, faithful, and constant Friend,

I have, with a kind of solemn pleasure, received now two of your letters. Perhaps it may be too *young* an expression, but it is nevertheless true, that

my heart has been writing to you for a fortnight past; but some occurrences which were very gratifying, and others which were very painful, kept sleep from my eyes and rest from my eyelids. A cold that seemed interminable, and a vigilance that rarely leaves me four hours of sleep, and my son's state of anxiety about his too dear and too delicate wife, of which I too had my share,—all this, and the nervousness it occasioned to a shattered frame like mine, will account for what I have mentioned.

This is the wrong side of the tapestry: let us turn with deep humility and gratitude to the brighter side. Margaret, the cause of so much anxious tenderness, I am happy and most thankful to say, is much better. As for my new house, it is the admiration of all beholders. I am very near my son, who you may believe is often with me; and I have in Miss Mackay an excellent and sensible young person for my companion.

I hope you are pleased to see the honours paid to the memory of the gallant and kind-hearted Duke of Gordon *; four monuments are erecting in different places to commemorate the heart of friendship and the soul of honour. It is pleasing to look back on the hallowed triumph of the pious Duchess; he entered into her feelings with a warmth suited to his ardent character, while she "allured to brighter worlds, and led the way." All these honours are not only pleasing testimonies to departed worth, but indications of a happy change of sentiment which I think is fast spreading among "the thinking people," as

* George, last Duke of Gordon, who died in 1836.

Cobbet was wont to call them. You are not sorry, I am sure, to see Sir Robert Peel, the Rector of the Glasgow University, nor to hear of all the loyal dinners that are making through so many parts of the country.

I was sitting alone one day lately, and the servant announced Mr. Campbell. Looking up, I saw a dejected-looking gentleman: "I should know you," said I, "but cannot be sure." "Campbell the poet," said he, with a kind of affecting simplicity. Though by no means approving his political principles, my heart warmed to him when I saw this sweet son of song dejected, spiritless, and afflicted. The death of his wife, to whom he was much attached, appears to have sunk him greatly.

I grieve to think you are anxious about your daughter's health,—too anxious I fear: but not having trod the beginning of your course in a thorny path, you have so long basked in the sunshine of unclouded prosperity, that it would be something out of the usual course of those events which are overruled for our benefit, if the full cup poured out for you should run clear to the bottom. Write to me soon; and believe me, as ever, affectionately yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXXIV.

TO MRS. HOOK.

9. Manor Place (and a very pleasant place it is),
Edinburgh, 10th December, 1836.

My dear Friend,

Nothing but an utter inability to write could have kept me so long from acknowledging the kindness of your most welcome gift, and the affectionate letter which accompanied it. Friendship in your mind is an evergreen on which time seems to have no influence. I feel your unabated affection as a rich cordial, cheering the decays of nature, when the hues, that brightened every object to a longer than common period of existence, seem fading away. Dr. Hook's image seemed powerfully awakened in my mind by the portrait you so kindly sent me: it is certainly very like. I have given the other engraving to my son, having now a domicile of my own, from the walls of which the loved and the lost may look graciously down upon me.

But it is time to tell you that I have nearly recovered from my formidable illness. That a life, already so far prolonged, should have stood this attack, is wonderful, but must be thankfully received, as it is undoubtedly given for some good purpose: the heart that has bled so often, the mind that has endured so much, may not yet be ripened for immortality. I am, in the mean time, most thankful to be still in possession of my faculties. The extent and tenacity of my memory astonishes myself: every place, every thing, and every person I

ever saw, seem to rise in lively portraiture before me. My friends have often urged me to give a sketch of my own varied and agitated life; but when I attempted to arrange my recollections, like the poet's image of fear, I "started at the sound myself had made," calling up, as it did, so many images of sorrow. I wonder whether I am fated to outlive those feelings, which seem to defy the power of time.

I am now to accuse you of a great omission. I always took it for granted that your daughter, with such parents, and so educated, must be a very good, because unspoilt, girl: and how very few girls are unspoilt, being generally either crammed with more than they can digest, or having their attention wholly directed to the frivolous and ornamental. But you have never told me what a treasure you possess in Georgiana, or how usefully a sound and healthy mind, and superior understanding are exerted in forming her opinions, and directing her conduct. The same person who paid this tribute of just praise to your daughter gave a very satisfactory account of Lord John Campbell's young family, but more particularly of Miss Emma, who seems to inherit all her mother's spirit and integrity. From both parents she has much of what is noble and honourable to inherit.

You have, I take it for granted, read Captain Hall's account of his residence in Styria, and of the Countess Purgstall, whose character and sufferings create a deeper interest than those of any heroine of romance. All the relations of the hard-fated Countess are clamorous against the Captain for this publication. For this I can see no reason: there is nothing to diminish

the Countess's high character, except it be that her grief, like her love, was unlimited. One is tempted to ask, —

> " Is there no bright reversion in the sky,
> For those who greatly think and nobly die?"

I am glad, however, that the Captain remained to witness the conclusion of this tragic scene; and I am not sorry to see this added lesson to those we daily receive, — not to trust in the smiles of fortune, but to lay up our treasures where they are imperishable. I am, dear friend, very affectionately yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXXV.

TO MRS. SMITH.

9. Manor Place, New-Year's-Day, 1837.

My much-loved coeval Friend*,

Outliving, as you have done, so many dear ones allied to me by congenial taste and feeling, I need not tell you, who knew and loved them, of a still dearer number of the departed, who added to this congeniality the claim of natural affinity, — plants of my hand, and children of my care, subjects of love and of grief unutterable. We have travelled through this long series of years, and now having both passed that

* Mrs. Grant was in the habit of addressing a letter to her early friend Mrs. Smith, on the first day of each year.

period of which Dr. Watts says, in his version of the Psalms,—

> "If to eighty we arrive,
> We rather sigh and groan than live,"

what remains for us to do? Not to waste our enfeebled spirits in endeavouring to make that glass transparent through which St. Paul says we can see but dimly while here. Let us leave the future, in full confidence in the only ground of Christian hope—the merits and mediation of that blessed Redeemer, who declares that his mission here was not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; let us turn and look back on "long time elapsed," and see how our heavenly Father has supported us under dangers and temptations.

Each of us was exposed to severe trials. I, to whom singular strength of constitution was given, for a purpose long since apparent to me and others, had to pass through the very hailstorm of adversity, while the pitiless tempest broke down, not only the gourd that sheltered me, but the branches of fair promise around me. Very dangerous temptations followed. Late in life others found out for me what I had never discovered myself,—that I possessed some kind of intellectual talent. This discovery brought flattery that would have turned my head, and made me useless and ridiculous, had it come at an earlier period. You again, without buoyant fancy or great mental energy, were meek and gentle, and firm to resist temptation,—that most dangerous of all temptations, unlooked-for prosperity. Surrounded and sheltered as you were by the Christian graces, you

were still beloved by all. To whom *on earth* did we owe these advantages?—

> "To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
> The God whom heaven's triumphant host
> And suffering saints on earth adore,
> Be glory as in ages past,
> As now it is, and still shall last,
> Till time itself shall be no more!"

This is the source and origin of all those precious blessings. That this coequal Trinity, whom you have ever diligently served, may bless you here and hereafter, is the prayer of your old and faithful friend,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXXVI.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 30th March, 1837.

My dear Friend,

Attached to each other by so many virtuous as well as friendly ties, I am fully persuaded—to use a powerful expression from poor Burns—that "the iron hand that breaks our band" can alone separate us on earth, and cannot prevent our reunion hereafter, if we add to faith charity, and trust in the only Saviour, the sinless sacrifice, the only mediator betwixt the Holy One who inhabits eternity and his frail dependant creatures, who are never safe but in the hollow of his hand. I heard so much, through my old consistent friend Mrs. Jane Gordon, of all your accumulated distresses, that I felt through every

nerve, while walking myself through that dark valley "where fate my melancholy walk ordained" on so many former occasions. I say there could be no greater proof of constant faithful affection than to mourn over your real and serious calamities, while my own heart was trembling on the point of separating from what is very dear to me,—and far worse, of seeing my son, the only tie that binds me to this world, deprived of the fond and faithful friend, whose intense devotion to himself was all that made life desirable to him. My dear Margaret is a little improved for two days past, or I could not write this. I hear that some as ill have recovered, though not to perfect health. It is possible; and what is not so in the hand to which we look for aid?

My dear friend, how heavy were the clouds that hung over you; but in that darkest hour, when there appeared none that could deliver, the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing on his wings, to illuminate and cheer. Had you sat down to form one of those idle wishes which we all form in certain moods of mind, could you have combined so many spiritual and temporal blessings as those which attend your pious son? A truly good Christian, like him, would lay his lamb on the altar with meek submission, however dear to him, and turn round from the grave where infancy sleeps sweetly, to attend to the summons of his divine Master, who has called him to a new scene of usefulness, and scattered blessings on his path.* I am delighted to hear of preferment so

* Mrs. Hook's son, the Rev. Dr. Walter F. Hook, had lately been appointed Vicar of Leeds.

visibly the reward of merit as that which has been bestowed on your son, and renders this change of residence necessary. I think you have seen enough in your own lot to vindicate eternal Providence, and "justify the ways of God to man." I must conclude abruptly, but will be more copious and explicit again. Cordially, faithfully, yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXXVII.

TO A FRIEND IN THE UNITED STATES, AMERICA.

Edinburgh, 15th May, 1837.

My dear Friend,

My last letter, which was written when our hopes were growing very feeble, would sound perhaps a note of preparation.—My dear daughter-in-law departed from this life on the 17th of April. Familiar as I have been with sorrow, the struggle betwixt hope and fear for six weeks before her death was very wearing out. Our dear Magaret's loss would, under any circumstances, have been acutely felt by one who was the daily witness of her modest worth, her native elegance of mind, and that devoted affection which made her a wife but too necessary to her husband's happiness. Her integrity and innocence, her generosity and calm steadiness of character, all her sweet affections, and kindly feelings, were a lesson to the young how they should live . . . . . I will not pain you or myself with the recital of her severe bodily

suffering, which bore heavily on her afflicted husband, who for six weeks scarcely ever left her, except in taking, at her own desire, a short walk for his health. Of his state of sorrow as yet I can say nothing but what I should have great pain in relating, and you in hearing. But if he profits by this affliction so as to set his affection on the true and sole source of consolation, he has now to be grateful for this dear one's relief from extreme suffering, the continuance of which it would have broken his heart to witness. . . . . I shall write to you soon again: meantime I am, with sincere regard, yours, very truly,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXXVIII.

TO MRS. IZETT.

Edinburgh, 30th June, 1837.

My dear Friend,

I am growing anxious to know how you go on, and whether the society of your brother and sister, and the genial influence of this fine weather, have had a favourable effect on your health. I long to hear of one of your usual revivals, as the Americans use the term in a more hallowed sense. My son took me out last week in a carriage, and threw it open for my accommodation. We thought of going to your door to inquire for you, but considered it would be as tantalising as the state of the Highland

hunter, who, in the feebleness of age, addressing the rock of his heart in his sorrowful farewell, says, "To me thou wilt not descend; to thee I cannot ascend." My visit would be something of the same nature;—to me you could not come out; to you I could not go in: so we settled the matter by going to the sea-side.

My son left me last week to join his sisters and brother-in-law in a tour, long proposed, to the North. I certainly miss him very much, yet I am pleased that he should, with variety and change of objects, assist the lenient hand which will, where there is so much soothing recollection, "from pensive sorrow strain the gall." My health has been much improved by this weather; I find a resource in the convenient, though not sentimental, aid of two very courteous chairmen, who, for a certain stipulated consideration, carry me to a neighbouring flower-garden, where they leave me for an hour, to meditate, like Hervey, and then convey me home.

I hope our young Queen will have common sense enough to put little trust in the enemies of the monarchy and the church; and yet I see them crowding fast about her. Is it not a strange anomaly to see three very young queens at once ruling three of the most ancient monarchies in Europe? It looks almost as ominous as the five moons which, Shakspeare tells you, appeared at once in the disastrous reign of King John. I hope you are, like me, reading Sir Walter Scott's Life with lively interest*: it has

* Effectual precautions were taken in Mrs. Grant's family circle to prevent her from seeing some remarks in Mr. Lockhart's "Life of

done me a great deal of good to see that beautiful mind so clearly displayed to us in all its truth, ardour, and kindness,—in all its humble and graceful simplicity. Lockhart merely draws up the veil to show us more distinctly the fair and noble portraiture: his life is indeed contained in his letters. But I must relieve you and myself from a theme so inexhaustible: it is creditable to humanity to see human worth so appreciated and beloved, as it always will be where there is so much faultless excellence. I am, indeed, most truly yours,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCLXXXIX.

TO MRS. SMITH.

Edinburgh, 12th July, 1837.

My dear Friend,

What has occasioned this long interval of silence? Should auld acquaintance be forgot, and days of lang syne? Certainly not, while memory remains: and it is cause for gratitude that it does remain as to every thing important or useful, and is still a faithful record of past kindness, mutual affection, mutual sympathy in joy and sorrow, and, I may add, mutual improvement. While more than common health, and more than common powers of recollection are still left us, at this late period, how deeply

Sir Walter Scott" as to her having declined a pension from government when first offered to her, which might have detracted from the pleasure she derived from the perusal of that work.

thankful we should be for such great and prolonged mercies: and though we should, like many others of our age, be allowed to lie ripening for immortality, "withering on the stalk," alike exempt from suffering and incapable of enjoyment, I should still hope that some shadowy recollection would survive of a friendship so pure from every worldly motive, so lasting and so beneficial to both. For though, from childhood, impressed with a deep and awful sense of those principles which have enabled me hitherto to endeavour to work out my own salvation with fear and trembling, I never had a friend, or even companion (till my dear children grew up), whose humble and genuine piety so nourished the good originally sown in my mind, as yourself. I could not confer equally precious benefits on you; but my busy, restless imagination, my love of knowledge and good, because entirely unsophisticated, awakened in your mind that love of knowledge and refinement which only wanted encouragement to bloom in modest freshness; and which certainly fitted you the more to be a companion to that superior friend, whose rectitude and judicious self-cultivation were so much more to him, than learning and science are to many others.*

I had a letter from my son lately, in which he describes a long excursion that he and his friends took through the Highlands, passing through the parish of Laggan, which is greatly improved since

* It may interest the reader to whom the name of Mrs. Grant's venerable friend Mrs. Smith of Jordanhill has become familiar in these volumes, to know that she still survives in the eighty-ninth year of her age, retaining the cheerful temper and all the amiable and benevolent feelings of her earlier life. [Dec. 1843.]

you have seen it: planting and building have done much for it. This truly glorious summer, "child of a dark and frowning sire," has not only gladdened the whole face of nature, including the lawn and grove opposite to my windows, but has afforded a rich and unhoped-for promise of harvest; while I, who generally abound in cheerful anticipations, was like the "sad prophet of the evil hour," foreseeing famine, merely because we never had so many successive seasons without an interval of scarcity.

I meant to tell you of my visit to see once more the fading form of my dear Mrs. Izett, who made an effort to walk out to the carriage; and of my patience in sitting to Mr. Watson Gordon for a large picture going to America. But I have done my utmost, and will tell you all in my next. I reluctantly conclude with telling you a needless truth—that I think of you always with faithful regard, and shall do so while

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXC.

TO MRS. HOOK.

Edinburgh, 8th December, 1837.

My very dear Friend, whom I have always found unaltered and unalterable, I hope you feel by this time what has often in my darkest hours (and they were not few) soothed me into resignation; I hope you feel deeply, truly touched with a sense of

the divine goodness in sparing so long this suffering saint—this loving and much-loved sister Eliza*, to be a blessing and example to us all; I include myself, for she was indeed very dear to me. But now that the stroke so long delayed has set free her pure and gentle spirit, we may suppose that while sharing the repose of the blest, with the long vista of eternity open before her, she must regard as momentary the space that intervenes between her leaving behind all she most loved on earth, and meeting them again where "tears shall be wiped from all faces," and separations shall be no more.

With so many calls to answer from valued correspondents, you will, like myself, find it difficult to be punctual to all; but I have much dependance on your daughter, and hope she will send a few lines to tell me of your own state of health and spirits, and those of that deeply-afflicted parent whose grief for the past, and fears for the future, must be hard indeed on a mind so sensitive and a frame so much enfeebled. I need scarcely tell you that I speak of Lord John Campbell, in whom I feel a deep and tender interest: the very idea of a family so renowned sinking so far below its ancient level, if this precious remaining shoot should be removed, is grievous to a Scottish heart. How melancholy it is to see those families who have attracted and deserved so much notice from the world melting away so speedily. The only descendants of the admirable Sir Walter Scott, besides

* Daughter of the late Sir Walter Farquhar, Bart., and sister of Mrs. Hook. Miss Farquhar, who is often mentioned in the previous letters to Mrs. Hook, died in December, 1837.

his two sons, are a boy and girl, the children of his dear-loved Sophia, the wife of John Lockhart. The present Sir Walter is, I am told, an honest and an honourable man. I think there is something very candid in his permitting his father's severe admonitory letters, addressed to him in the days of his youth, to be published; for without his knowledge and permission they could not have appeared. What admirable and truly useful letters those are, and how full of perfect good nature and warm affection.

What a new source of entertainment and improvement is opened to us in those delightful biographies with which the literature of our late years has been enriched and adorned. The Egyptians showed their piety to the departed by embalming their remains; but we commemorate the worthy and the wise by making that worth and wisdom available to the survivors. With what pleasure, mingled with awe, we find ourselves in the immediate presence of Johnson, of Gray, and of Cowper. I am now reading, with eager attention, Southey's Life of Cowper, which I am sure you will read with equal interest.

I suppose you may have lately seen something of a fine youth I introduced to you once,—William Cumming, of Logie.* He has had very bad health, and has been going about like the evil spirit of whom we read in Scripture, seeking rest but finding none; and after traversing Madeira, the West Indies, and latterly Egypt and the Holy Land, has returned to shelter from the winter's cold in Jersey. You will

* Author of "Notes of a Wanderer in Search of Health;" comprising travels in Egypt, Greece, and Germany; published in 1839.

soon receive another letter by a very good friend of mine, the Rev. Dr. Mackay, of Dunoon, a man beloved in his own parish, and distinguished for learning and piety. I am, dear friend, yours, ever truly and kindly.

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXCI.*

TO MRS. GRANT, OF KINCORTH, MELVILLE STREET.

9. Manor Place,
28th January, 1838.

My dear Mrs. Grant,

After the frequent and severe afflictions with which it has pleased our merciful Father to visit you lately, I have no doubt of your bearing those chastisements meekly, and seeking those consolations which can alone support our feeble nature under the calamities for which this perishing world affords no relief. I can tell you nothing that you do not know of the sources of hope and consolation which are ever open to the Christian mourner; but I had such a love for your dear grand-daughter, who has been so early called, that I feel a melancholy pleasure, which you will no doubt share, in retracing the short period of her transit through this life to one of more enduring felicity. Loving and beloved—gay and happy—

* This letter refers to the death of Miss Davina Grant, daughter of the late Frederick Grant, Esq. of Mount Cyrus, who died at Clifton in 1838, in the thirteenth year of her age.

always giving and receiving pleasure, she was herself delighted and the delight of every one around her; while the blossom of early talent gave fair promise for advancing years. But a higher and a happier lot was assigned to her than this world has to bestow: her pure spirit, which seemed always aspiring after something better than life has to give, was early summoned from all the dangers of a world of sin and sorrow to the joys of a happy eternity. How very sinful then it would be in us to repine at her departure! We are not forbidden to suppose that her angelic mother is now rejoicing over this new inhabitant of heaven. I most of all lament for her sister; —the strong faith and the bright visions that may reconcile older people to the Lord's doing what he will with his own, can scarcely be expected at her age.

I think that Mr. Grant's letter to you expresses all that a resigned and pious parent ought to feel. There are few such young creatures as our Davina! With regard to the past, you have to look back on every thing that was beautiful here, and forward to all that is bright in a future meeting with her. That you may take this view of the late visitation, is the sincere wish of yours, with true sympathy,

ANNE GRANT.

LETTER CCCXCII.

TO MRS. HOOK, CLARENDON SQUARE, LEAMINGTON.

9. Manor Place, Edinburgh,
1st February, 1838.

My dear Friend,

I think, in the long course of our correspondence, I have scarcely allowed such an interval to pass without writing to you,—a blank which has been a suspension of one of my chief remaining pleasures. I cannot say that my way of life is fallen into the sear and yellow leaf: of that which should accompany old age, as honour, love, obedience, and troops of friends, I have more than I could well expect, after outliving so many of those nearest and dearest to me. For a very long time every night produced a mournful retrospect of the past, and surrounded me with the shades of the departed. But now, while the affection for them lives in full force, I can think over the past with more tranquillity, seeing the many sufferings that have been spared them by their early summons to the land of rest, for their spotless lives and thorough dependance upon the merits of the Redeemer; and as the period shortens when I humbly hope to meet them again, I feel still more tranquillised.....

Pray tell me what you think of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, which no doubt you have read, as well as all the world beside.* Did you ever meet with a character so entirely loveable,—such a happy combination of all that attracts our highest admira

See note, page 315. Letter 388.

tion, and conciliates our warmest affection? I could not have believed, familiar as I am with wounds so deep and so near the heart, that a death could have affected me so deeply; and yet, till his noble vessel became, as sailors say, top-heavy, how bright and serene was his passage through life. He might well say, with Addison,—

> "A thousand thousand precious gifts
> My daily thoughts employ,
> Nor is the least a cheerful heart
> That tastes those gifts with joy."

No person had ever more enjoyment of life, or used the highest prosperity with more moderation and more attention to the comfort and advantage of others. I think it a happy circumstance that so much of his correspondence has been preserved: the picture which he has unconsciously drawn of himself conveys a stronger likeness of the individual, than we could derive from the most partial sketch by the warmest friend. Who indeed enjoyed so much happiness, or communicated so much to others? Humble as I am, my feelings, like his, are all aristocratic; and detesting the low-minded envy that leads people to hate their superiors merely for being such, I feel gratified in seeing families of ancient descent holding high the torch of honour and of excellence, and enlightening their elevated sphere with the virtues becoming their high station. Much of this pleasure I enjoyed in contemplating the worth and intellectual qualities of the Buccleuch family, as you trace them in their correspondence with their still more distinguished clansman. Farewell, dear constant friend, and believe me yours while

ANNE GRANT.

Mrs. Grant survived some months after the date of the last of these letters, and though none of a later date have been preserved, continued to correspond with her friends until a few weeks before her death, which took place at her house in Manor Place, Edinburgh, on the 7th of November, 1838, in the eighty-fourth year of her age.

THE END.

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